



## GARDEN JOY

Glimpse behind the wall at historic plot



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## PANTO TIME

Fairy Godmother Niki has The X Factor



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## Deputy is appointed new leader of council

DUDLEY Council's new leader pledged to put 'community engagement at the heart' of the authority's work, while revealing plans for the outgoing boss to stay on as a cabinet member.

Councillor Pete Lowe was officially appointed leader of Dudley Council at a meeting of the full council on Monday, following Councillor David Sparks' decision to stand down.

The new boss, a Lye and Stourbridge North councillor, has declared his priorities as community engagement and inclusion, also maintaining Dudley as an authority which is ahead of the curve nationally.

He revealed that Councillor Sparks will remain in the controlling group's cabinet. The Labour group will appoint a deputy leader by the end of this week.

Councillor Lowe said: "David is a tough act to follow and I'm delighted that he has accepted my offer to remain on the cabinet as his expertise in areas such as combined authorities is invaluable. He's a very close political and personal friend and has given incredible service to local government in Dudley."

Councillor Lowe has been on the council for almost 10 years and had been deputy leader.

## Free parking for shoppers

PARKING charges will be suspended by Dudley Council across the borough this Saturday for the benefit of festive shoppers and traders.

Cradley Heath youth choir, Pure Harmony, has been confirmed to perform at 2pm at the Small Business Saturday Christmas Market taking place from 10am to 4pm at Stone Street Square.

Free parking at all council-run car parks is also being offered on December 14 and 21.

# £20M RAIL BID FOR CASTLE HILL

**A LIGHT rail service taking train passengers into Dudley for the first time in 50 years could be opened within five years under a £20 million flagship project.**

The state-of-the-art railcar would transport millions of visitors from Dudley Port station to the former station at the bottom of Castle Hill.

This would help tourists visit Dudley Zoo, the Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Canal Trust. There are also plans to then extend the light rail service towards Dudley bus station.

The scheme has been unveiled following a deal struck between Dudley Council and Warwick Manufacturing Group, which wants to use it as a pilot scheme for its next generation of railcars.

The group will open a multi-storey National Centre For Development of Very Light Rail Technology at the new station. Around 45 people would work at the site, overseeing the trial service and developing the technology.

### Funding

Two tracks would be laid on a disused freight line from Dudley Port to the town with one used for the passenger service and the second for exclusive use by the tram developers.

The group and council have secured support from Centro. The Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Zoo have also backed the plan.

Dudley Council transport boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said a business case was being written up for funding with bids to be made to the Government's Local Growth Fund and to

By Alex Ross

the European Union. It is hoped that work could start on the scheme as early as next year, with the opening of the passenger service planned within five years.

Councillor Ahmed said: "The passenger tram train service would be the jewel in the crown for the continued regeneration of Dudley. It would bring huge potential for the town, bringing in millions of new visitors who currently face difficulty getting to the town and its attractions."

"Thirty seven million people visit Birmingham each year, with 70 per cent coming in on train and we need an easy link for those people into Dudley."

He added: "The scheme depends on funding but we are confident this will happen."

"We have received enthusiastic support from groups across the country and in the borough."

"This has been a long-time in the making but now we feel we are now at a stage to announce it."

Councillor Ahmed said the scheme would not stop the council's aspiration for an extension of the Midland Metro service through Dudley to Brierley Hill, serving the Merry Hill shopping centre.

## Lights fantastic for the festive season



Enjoying the switching on of the Christmas lights is Isabelle Harris, aged 4, of Stourbridge

THERE were plenty of smiles — and even snow — as thousands turned out to see the Christmas lights switched on in Stourbridge.

Market stalls lined the High Street giving visitors the chance to browse for gifts. There were also vintage steam engines, a food festival and free funfair rides.

Entertainment in the square outside the Crown Centre included performances by The Empty Can — the band behind the Black Country Anthem — and singers from Halesowen-based Startime Variety.

Father Christmas joined Chairman of Stourbridge Chamber of Trade, David Harcourt, to light up the Christmas tree at the top of the High Street.

There were cheers from the crowd as an artificial snow machine added to the festive spirit with youngsters dancing around in the snowflakes.

Mr Harcourt, who organised the event with Dudley Council and the Ryemarket Shopping Centre, thanked the crowds for turning out. "I've never seen quite so many people in Stourbridge at Christmas time before," he added.

It is Brierley Hill's turn with festivities taking place in the town on Saturday with a Christmas tree festival at St Michael's Church from 11am to 2pm, a panto trail in Brierley Hill High Street from 10am to 3.30pm and the lights switched on at 5pm at the Moor Centre.

## Man is rescued after fall down cliff

A MAN fell more than 50ft down a cliff face at a nature reserve in Dudley sparking a major rescue bid by fire crews and paramedics.

Specialist teams were brought in to rescue the man, aged in his 20s, after the fall in Wrens Nest Nature Reserve.

It took emergency services more than an hour to stabilise the man and raise him to safety due to the difficult location where they found him.

The man managed to 999 himself to alert paramedics after the fall from a pathway above the cliff. He suffered arm and pelvic injuries and a suspected chest injury in the accident.

### Paramedics

An air ambulance was sent to the scene but the man was taken by road to Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital for further treatment.

Crews from West Midlands Ambulance Service arrived at the scene shortly after 11am on Monday.

Paramedics from the Hazardous Area Response Team called for the assistance of fire crews to help bring the man to safety. Rescue teams from Wednesbury and Bickenhill fire stations joined a crew from Brierley Hill fire station.

## Three hurt in car crash

A STRETCH of a busy road was closed and three people were taken to hospital after a head-on crash during rush hour in Dudley on Monday.

Emergency services were called to the A491 in Kingswinford near the A449 island at around 5pm.

A van was involved in a collision with a Seat Ibiza travelling in the opposite direction.

The driver of the van and the driver of the car and passenger were taken to hospital.

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# Town employs its first 'ambassador'

DUDLEY has appointed an 'ambassador' as part of the multi-million transformation of the town centre. The new role will take on responsibility for working closely with traders and businesses in the town to help boost visitor numbers.

Communications professional Nikki Cheung has taken up the role, which is funded by the European Regional Development Fund and

Dudley Council. Two new apprenticeship places will also be created and volunteers will be recruited to act as 'champions' for the town centre and Castle Hill tourism zone. Ms Cheung said: "This is a really exciting time to work in Dudley. Millions of pounds are being invested to improve the town and I am delighted to be a part of this."

"Part of my role is to shout about

the many things that are attractive and unique to the town. This will be everything from its fascinating history and architectural features, which are still being uncovered, to its thriving cafe and independent shops scene."

She added: "I will also organise events in the town centre, with the first one being the Small Business Saturday Christmas market, which

is taking place in Stone Street Square on Saturday."

Regeneration boss Councillor Judy Foster said: "The Dudley Ambassadors team is an integral part of the resources we are ploughing into Dudley to regenerate the town."

"The future recruitment of community volunteers sits squarely within our Love Your Community programme."

# MP urges carers to take up support

STOURBRIDGE MP Margot James has voiced her support for the Carers UK campaign.

The campaign urges people who are caring for an ill or disabled person to take up the assistance available to them.

Speaking on Carers Rights Day, Ms James encouraged the 10,667 unpaid carers in Stourbridge to find out more about financial and practical support they are entitled to.

She said: "Carers are fulfilling a vital role in our communities but too often they go without the support they need because they do not know about the practical and financial assistance available. I have visited many of the care homes around Stourbridge and helped a number of constituents who have come to me for help with caring for their loved ones. It is so important that these individuals know how to access the right information and advice about the support they are entitled to."

Carers can order a free copy of Carers UK's guide called 'Looking After Someone' by visiting [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or calling Carers UK's advice line on 0808 808 7777.

# Women hurt in car crash

TWO women were taken to hospital after the cars they were travelling in collided on a Black Country road.

Emergency services were called to the A4123 Birmingham New Road at its junction with Shaw Road in Coseley at 7.15am on Sunday.

A red Daewoo and a green Vauxhall Corsa were involved in the crash. Crews from Bilston Fire Station attended the scene.

West Midlands Ambulance service treated the women but their injuries were not thought to be serious.

# Village panto

KINVER Light Operatic Society is this week staging its version of popular panto Jack and The Beanstalk at Edgecliff High School in the village. Evening performances start at 7.30pm and there is also a 2.30pm matinee on Saturday. Call (01384) 836963.

THE Friends of Dudley Hippodrome group has submitted a new proposal to takeover the empty 1930s theatre on Castle Hill.

This comes after original plans were dismissed as unviable by an independent review.

Entertainment company The ROK Group has already handed over to Dudley Council its plans to reopen and run the Hippodrome.

# Upbeat view from firms across region

DESPITE fears of a slowdown for industry, more than half of manufacturing firms in the West Midlands say they have seen sales rise and expect them to keep on growing in the coming months.

Improved productivity has been key to small and medium-sized firms continuing to grow, with six in 10 saying they expect to spend more on new technology, machinery and premises.

But workforce skills remain vital, and 98 per cent of firms taking part in the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) Barometer survey say they aim to maintain or increase their workforce.

Lorraine Holmes, Wolverhampton-based area director at MAS, said: "Our Barometer shows that manufacturers are already responding to recent observations by the Bank of England that productivity needs to be raised."

"It is also reassuring that it's not just the large manufacturers who understand what makes them competitive. Our small and medium firms have also recognised the importance of continually improving productivity."

Friends members say a refurbished Hippodrome would have 1,600 seats and their business plan states ticket prices would be 'kept to a minimum' as a venue for all the family.

Volunteers say they would need to take over use of the building initially to rent out some of the rooms to generate funds. They have identified five rooms, including first and second floor landings and the basement, that would be refurbished and let out.

The venue's previous operators Gala Bingo spent around £84,000 on running costs per year, according to figures obtained by the group. The Friends say they have assumed an increase of around 33 per cent on the operating costs for up-to-date figures.

## Reduced

They claim projected running costs of £112,000 could be reduced by at least 80 per cent if the Friends are granted charitable status.

Plans suggest the approximate cost of employing 10 members of staff would create annual costs of £200,000.

But officials predict profits would come through taking a proportion of ticket sales and the sale of refreshments. Takings would be £16,000 based on selling 800 seats, priced at £20, for a show. Friends group members say they can make £35,000 a year selling refreshments and £88,200 a year in drinks.

# Top author nearly gave up



And here's one I wrote earlier — Miranda Dickinson nearly gave up writing forever

AN AUTHOR whose books have been best-sellers since her prose was spotted online says she still can't believe her luck.

Miranda Dickinson, who now lives in Gornal, released her debut novel in 2009. She told fans at Sedgley Library on Thursday about her journey from unemployed copywriter to the bestseller lists. Her new book I'll Take New York revisits the characters of her breakthrough novel Fairytale of New York.

Mrs Dickinson revealed that she had written since childhood but had given up. "When I was at college there was a boy I really liked so I summoned the courage to tell him I wrote stories and he replied: 'you

make stories up, shouldn't you have grown out of that by now? I was absolutely heart-broken and I stopped writing all together."

After a spell away from the Black Country, she returned home and started contributing to a writers' website run by publishers Harper Collins.

"I later got a call from Harper Collins which led to me getting a three book deal," Mrs Dickinson said.

"I couldn't believe it, I was just a girl from Kingswinford."

Fairytale of New York was followed by It Started With a Kiss, Welcome to My World, When I Fall in Love and now I'll Take New York.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

**Centres will help dementia patients**

THE second stage of a £1.6 million project to revamp day centres to help them better serve the needs of residents with dementia has been completed.

Dudley Council has spent £650,000 overhauling Brett Young Day Centre in Halesowen. It follows the completion of refurbishment at Brettell Lane Day Centre in Stourbridge.

They have been turned into 'Dementia Gateways' to help 1,300 people as part of a scheme to improve the support given to the growing numbers diagnosed with the condition.

**Couple injured in Brierley Hill crash**

A COUPLE were taken to hospital after a head-on crash that caused a traffic jam at Merry Hill shopping centre.

Emergency services were called to Central Avenue, at around 5.45pm on Saturday after two cars collided.

The driver of a silver saloon car had to be cut free by firefighters from Brierley Hill and was taken to Russells Hall Hospital with his wife for treatment.

The driver of the other car suffered minor injuries.

**Discover park's history on trail**

WALKERS will be able to learn more about the history of a grade I listed park.

Wardens at the Leasowes in Halesowen will host a walk on Saturday, from 10am to 1pm. This is a rare chance to follow the original circular route which crosses part of the current golf course, usually out of bounds.

To book this or a Christmas wreath making session call (01384) 814642.

**Minor injuries in two car accident**

TWO cars were involved in a crash in Fenton Street, Brierley Hill, last week.

Fire crews were called to the accident and paramedics treated a mother and daughter, who had been travelling in a Renault Scenic, for minor injuries. The other vehicle involved in the accident at 7.30pm last Wednesday was a Fiat Punto carrying two people.

**Movie matinee**

A SCREENING of cinematic culinary comedy Chef will have a matinee screening at Stourbridge Town Hall on December 15. It starts at 1.30pm and tickets cost £3. Call the box office on (01384) 812812.

# Buses are diverted because of roadworks

BUS passengers across the region are being warned to expect journeys to be diverted due to roadworks.

Operator Diamond Buses said there may be delays affecting the number 41 service due to traffic calming measures being carried out in West Bromwich High Street until March 31.

In Dudley the 205 and 243 are being diverted due to road closures in King Street between Union Street and Flood Street until Saturday between 11.45pm and 6am.

The 205 is running in the direction of Dudley via Stafford Street, The Inhedge, Parsons Street, Ednam Road, Priory Road, New Street, and Fisher Street to Dudley Bus Station.

The 243 is running in the direction of Dudley via Dudley High Street, Stafford Street, The Inhedge, Parsons Street, Ednam Road, Priory Road, New Street, Fisher Street, to Dudley Bus Station.

Then from Dudley via Fisher Street, Castle Street, The Broadway, Ednam Road, Priory Road, Priory Street, The Inhedge, Stafford Street, Dudley High Street, Vicar Street, King Street. The service then picks up its normal route.

# Today editor job for Lenny

DUDLEY-BORN comedian Lenny Henry will guest edit BBC Radio 4's Today over the festive period.

Actor and TV personality Lenny will be speaking about diversity on the show on December 30.

He will speak to people who broke down racial barriers and examine how much progress is needed in broadcasting, business and sport. Former governor of the Bank of England Mervyn King, House of Commons Speaker John Bercow and former Everything But The Girl singer Tracey Thorn will also take part.

# Animals dumped

MORE than 200 animals have been abandoned in the West Midlands in the past two months. RSPCA figures show 219 animals reported as abandoned in the region. RSPCA Inspector Vicki Taylor says they appreciate 'times are difficult for pet owners' but there is help.

# People having a say on where axe will fall

AROUND 2,500 people have responded to a major consultation as council bosses in Dudley consider £57 million worth of cuts.

Dudley Council wants people to select the top five services across the borough that matter the most to them.

So far around 2,500 responses have been received in three weeks since the consultation launched, the same amount received in total last year. That's out of around 312,900 people living in the borough.

The council is proposing savings of

£22.9m for 2015/16, moving up to £25.3m by 2016/17 and £27.4m by 2017/18. But the borough faces a deficit of up to £30m by 2017/18 if additional savings are not found.

Finance boss Councillor Stuart Turner said he was pleased by the amount of responses received so far.

"The response to the Big Question budget consultation in these first few weeks has been overwhelming and we would like to thank everyone who has taken time to have their say," he said. "We have already re-

ceived around 2,500 responses in just three weeks which is about the same amount we received in total last year.

"This is, in part, due to our improved way of communicating with residents through our new e-bulletin service. We have been committed to engaging with local people over the last couple of years and I would remind residents they have until the end of January to take part — and can do so by going to our website or visiting their local library or Dudley Council Plus."

Money saving proposals include a shake-up of Dudley youth services to claw back £200,000. There are also plans to increase burial fees, expected to bring in £520,000. Savings will be made by transferring the management of the New Bradley Hall care home in Kingswinford to a private firm.

There are proposals to turn off some street lights after midnight to reduce energy bills. Maintenance of parks could also be hit, in an attempt to save £265,000.

# Group ready to start work restoring landmark church

CAMPAIGNERS aiming to raise thousands of pounds to restore a landmark Dudley church are working to clear the final hurdle.

St John's Church Preservation Group will be carrying out restoration work on the building in Kates Hill, Dudley, after the Diocese of Worcester agreed to lease the church, which has been closed since 2002, to the group.

Members have now received a second draft of a proposed lease which would enable them to take on responsibility for the Grade II listed building.

Chairman Deb Brownlee said once the lease was agreed they would be able to take over the building and start work.

## Tourism

The group wants to restore the building and re-open it for Christian worship, tourism and community use.

She said: "The revised lease addresses most of the issues we raised, which were mainly around permissions for works and some aspects of the use of the building."

"We are now going through the lease line by line again. We are very conscious that we are laying the foundation for future custodians of the St John's church building as well as for ourselves. It's our job to set things up at the start in the best way we can."

The preservation group will also be consulting fur-

By Heather Large

ther with their legal advisors Wall James Chappell, of Stourbridge, before making a formal response to the revised draft.

Ms Brownlee said: "It's a fantastic feeling to be able to move things on again."

"We are very grateful to the church authorities for their very positive response to the points we raised, and to our supporters who have been sticking patiently with this campaign through thick and thin. Soon we will be able to reward their patience and goodwill. We do feel that we are nearly there now."

Recent surveys have shown the church nave and chancel are structurally sound. Members want to keep the 173-year-old church building, which is described as 'a virtually intact Victorian church', as unaltered as possible.

To offer help contact the group by email savestjohnschurch@hotmail.co.uk or by calling 0787 119 5042.



Glenda Jukes is delighted with her bargain priced television at Merry Hill Asda

# Festive rush has begun at Merry Hill

MORE than 200,000 shoppers will descend upon Merry Hill for one of the busiest weekends of the year.

The shopping extravaganza kicked off with Black Friday, which saw tens of thousands of bargain-hunters scramble to get cut-price deals.

Hundreds queued from the early hours and, while the sales at Merry Hill passed peacefully, the American-import of Black Friday drew criticism from police as fights and scuffles broke out in other areas of the country.

## Queues

Bosses at the Brierley Hill shopping centre said Christmas trading was already up 30 per cent on last year.

On Friday around 560 people arrived at the centre's Asda to grab bargains within the first hour of trading.

Queues had formed 90 minutes before it opened at 8am with 200 people hitting the shop floor within seconds of staff welcoming them inside.

First in the queue was Glenda Jukes from Brierley Hill, who declared the deals to help her save up to £300 were too good to miss.

# Double murder trial date

A TRIAL date has been set for a man accused of murdering two pensioners, including an 80-year-old Halesowen woman. Leo Barnes, 32, is alleged to have killed Cynthia Beomond in Halesowen and Philip Silverstone in London on consecutive days in June. Barnes, of Balsall Heath, appeared via video at Wolverhampton Crown Court having pleaded not guilty to two murder counts. He was remanded in custody for trial at Wolverhampton on January 15.

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## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



HOW democracy works. September: Scotland votes convincingly against independence. November: Whitehall announces Scotland will get control over its income tax. To the losers, the spoils?

ED Miliband, without a hint of irony, tells us the word that springs into his mind when he sees white-van man flying England flags from his Transit is "respect." Which is odd because the rest of us think: "Bet he's using a mobile phone."

A LABOUR bigwig on the radio was explaining how eagerly his party is recruiting working-class members. So when did you last see a new working-class Labour candidate fight a winnable General Election seat? Labour candidates are overwhelmingly middle-class and it helps if you are married to an existing MP or if your surname is Blair, Straw, Kinnock or Prescott.

MY poppy has arrived. Fresh from the mud of the Tower of London display, it is one of more than 800,000 ceramic blooms which captured the attention and imagination of millions. I can't recall such a successful, spontaneous, effective and efficient means of marking an anniversary and it didn't cost the public purse a penny. The poppies arrive neatly packed in a box with a booklet explaining the history of the display and a certificate of authenticity. Something to treasure. But this must not be the end of the Tower's part in the Great War commemoration. July 1, 2016 will be the 100th anniversary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme when about 20,000 British soldiers perished and 40,000 were wounded. The planting of 20,000 white crosses in the moat of the Tower would be a fine memorial to the carnage of that day and to a battle which is forever imprinted in the British psyche.



REALITY check, please. Home Secretary Theresa May says Britain faces a terror threat "unmatched before or since 9/11." That's a nasty attack of amnesia, Mrs May. Have you really forgotten that before 9/11 we had 30 years of the IRA Troubles? That was real terrorism. Thousands of bombs were detonated all over the United Kingdom and Ulster. More than 3,500 people were killed and 47,500 injured. Since 9/11 there has been one successful Islamist attack on the UK, the 7/7 Tube bombings of 2005 in which 52 people died, plus the slaying of Lee Rigby by a pair of deranged psychopaths. To compare today's nebulous terrorist threat with the real, daily carnage of the Troubles is to rewrite history with no regard for the facts. The truth is that you are far less likely to be involved in a terrorist incident today than at any time in the 1970s, 1980s or 1990s. Why politicians want to convince you otherwise is anyone's guess.

FIRST, Q&A magazine names Tony Blair Philanthropist of the Year. Next, Save the Children gives him its Global Legacy award. Are we witnessing a worldwide epidemic of irony?

REMEMBER Me (BBC1), the new supernatural thriller starring Michael Palin proves once again that nothing makes us dive behind the sofa quite like dark old houses, creaky floorboards, flickering shadows and things suddenly going BANG! The old ingredients are still the best.

MEDIA doctor Max Pemberton points out to Bob Geldof that Ebola is by no means the biggest threat to Africa. As he puts it: "Diarrhoea kills far more people than Ebola. Why hasn't Bob released a single about that?" Possibly because the Diarrhoea Song already exists. It is often heard being sung lustily on coach trips by Year Six kids and, frankly, no-one would want to buy it.

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star**

# Boost for charity helping gamblers

A GAMBLING charity which runs a residential centre in Dudley has been awarded £1.6 million funding.

The cash from The Responsible Gambling Trust will support Gordon Moody Association's treatment for problem gambling for the next three years.

Gordon Moody Association runs residential centres in Dudley and Beckenham where it offers inten-

sive 12-week programmes to help people with severe gambling problems.

It will also enable the charity to extend its counselling work and offer new services for women.

### Dedicated

Managing director Elaine Smethurst said: "Gordon Moody Association was the first charity in the

UK dedicated to providing help to problem gamblers. The Responsible Gambling Trust's support will enable us to provide residential treatment for many more problem gamblers and develop our ambitious plans for the charity."

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said: "The Gordon Moody Association does brilliant work to help people in Dudley and across the UK.

The charity does a lot to help problem gamblers in Dudley and I'm delighted that this new funding will allow them to help hundreds more."

The Responsible Gambling Trust is the leading charity in the UK committed to minimising gambling-related harm.

It is an independent national charity funded by donations from the gambling industry.

# Advice on issues of teenage drinking

A GUIDE on how to deter youngsters from excessive drinking has been produced by a Dudley-based charity.

'You, Your Teenager and Alcohol' has been drawn up by the Centre for Equality and Diversity (CFED) and is available to parents at libraries and from children's centres across the borough.

The guide includes sections on delaying teenage drinking, the impact of alcohol on the young person's growing body and offers advice on how to talk to children about the dangers of booze.

Mushtaq Hussain, chairman of CFED, said: "The new guide spotlights the need for parents and others to pay attention to the risk of teenagers drinking.

"By talking to teenagers about the short term risks of heavy drinking parents can influence their teenager's use of alcohol.

"Heavy drinking in the teenage years can lead to impaired school performance, early sexual activity and other risky behaviours."

Visit [www.cfed.org.uk](http://www.cfed.org.uk) to view the guide online.

Earlier this year a grant of £15,000 was awarded to CFED, based in Stone Street, from the European Union European Social Fund.

## Fiery fretwork from guitar duo

MEXICAN acoustic guitar duo Rodrigo y Gabriela, famed for their passionate and fiery fretwork, have a sold out concert at Birmingham Symphony Hall tomorrow night (Friday).

Rodrigo Sanchez and Gabriela Quintero have performed for President Barack Obama at the White House, played at the Glastonbury Festival, and written and recorded music for two major Hollywood movies (the Pirates of the Caribbean and Shrek sequels). This year they won critical acclaim for their fourth studio album 9 Dead Alive.

## Fewer smokers

THE number of smokers in the West Midlands is lower than the national average.

The proportion of people in Great Britain who smoke cigarettes now stands at 19 per cent, a fall of more than half in the past 40 years. In the West Midlands the figure is 17.8 per cent.

# Open day part of new bid for tunnel museum

By Andrew Turton

**PLANS to turn Cold War bunkers near Stourbridge into a major visitor attraction have been revived by campaigners.**

They are launching a fundraising drive to open up Drakelow Tunnels, near Wolverley, as a museum.

Drakelow has a mysterious labyrinth of tunnels which were also used as a manufacturing base during the Second World War.

A scheme to renovate the tunnels and create a museum dedicated to their history was refused by Wyre Forest District Council planners in August, citing concerns over traffic.

But now discussions have been held with site owners, Swiss company Quercus Ilex SA, which is considering an appeal against the planning decision.

It comes as members of campaign group, the Drakelow Tunnels Preservation Trust, revealed details of a fundraising open day they plan to hold on Sunday.

The group say around £500,000 is needed to fund the restoration of around a third of the network of tunnels and to operate it as a museum for the first year.

Group member Michael Scott say volunteers have faced problems since thieves broke into the tunnels two years ago damaging one of two diesel generators.

They want to raise an initial £60,000 o restore the bunker's electricity supply and hope the open day will help bring in that vital cash.

"These tunnels could become an important tourist attraction and we need £500,000 to get the tunnels to a standard to get them open and for the first year running costs," said Mr Scott. "We are looking to finance it ourselves."

Places on open day tours cost £10 per adult and £5 for children aged between five and 16. Children under five cannot be admitted. A donation will also be made to Guide Dogs.

To book a place visit [www.facebook.com/SaveDrakelow](http://www.facebook.com/SaveDrakelow)



Labyrinth — passageways stretch into the distance at the former secret bunker under Kinver Edge



The entrance to Wolverley's Drakelow Tunnels, located between Stourbridge and Kidderminster

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# Rail blow sees coach firm step up services

RAIL disruptions planned for over Christmas have led to a flurry of coach bookings, say West Midlands-based National Express.

The company said its advance booking figures for services to and from Birmingham from now until January 4 were up four per cent on last year with thousands booked to travel.

Engineering works will mean the West Coast Main Line between Birmingham and London will be disrupted between 5pm on Christmas Eve until December 28. The line also goes to Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Dudley.

National Express will run 30 direct daily coach services each way between Birmingham and London, and on Christmas Day and Boxing Day coach services will continue when the train services are completely suspended.

It is doubling the number of services running on Christmas Day with coaches running to key towns and cities and busiest airports. National Express UK coach managing director Tom Stables said: "With rail disruption threatening to spoil the festive getaway for some, we're pleased to ensure people all over the UK have an easy ride this Christmas."

## Fire spread from a car

TWO men escaped after a fire spread from a car to the house it was parked outside in Brierley Hill.

Firefighters tackled the blaze at the home in Brettell Lane, which broke out in the early hours of last Thursday.

Crews from Stourbridge, Brierley Hill and Haden Cross fire stations were called to the incident at around 3.10am.

A West Midlands Fire Service spokesman said: "The fire caused 70 per cent damage to the vehicle and 90 per cent damage to the porch."

## Driver is cut free

A MOTORIST had to be cut free from his car by firefighters after being involved in a crash with another vehicle on Brettell Lane in Audnam at 7.30pm Friday. The driver was taken to Russells Hall Hospital with injuries thought to be serious but not life-threatening.

# New Tory candidate for battleground seat



Dudley South Tory candidate Mike Wood

THE new Tory candidate in the key marginal seat of Dudley South has declared himself a Eurosceptic who would vote to leave the European Union unless there is 'fundamental' reform.

Mike Wood was chosen by a public vote to try to hold on to Dudley South when Conservative MP Chris Kelly stands down at the General Election in May.

Constituents were invited to choose from four candidates. Although 80 people registered, 45 turned up last Wednesday night to pick a candidate for the seat where the Conservatives seek to defend a 3,856 majority.

Father-of-two Mr Wood, 38, is a barrister who spent seven years working in the European Parliament. He is a councillor for Pedmore and Stourbridge East, who works as a freelance web designer and for Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris.

He said: "I think 45 people going to a selection meeting on a miserable Wednesday night in November is a good result. It is going to be a tough fight next year but I am ready for it. We have to work very hard, listen to people and get our message across. We cannot afford to lose seats like Dudley South."

Mr Wood said the meeting, which was not open to the press, saw questions raised on the NHS and political reform.

Mr Wood said: "I am a Eurosceptic. I've been arguing for reform and it's finally within reach."

"I would love to see a fundamentally different relationship with the EU to persuade me it's worth staying in."

Labour's candidate is Natasha Millward while UKIP will be represented by Phil Rowe and the Greens by Vicky Duckworth. The Liberal Democrats have yet to announce a candidate.

# Armed robber is sent to prison for terrifying raid

AN ARMED robber who terrified a female worker when taking part in a raid on a Black Country bookmaker's shop has started a four-and-a-half-year jail sentence.

Luke Wroe and an accomplice were each brandishing a knife when they burst into the William Hill shop in Brettell Lane, Amblecote, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

## Threat of Taser often is enough

WEST Midland Police fired a Taser electric shock weapon at 122 people during the first six months of this year.

Six hundred officers in the force are trained to carry the weapon that was used in 439 incidents across the region over the same period. In 56 incidents the weapon just needed to be drawn or simply aimed 31 times before the incident was resolved.

### Dot

The laser red dot had to be directed onto 228 people before they calmed down, new figures disclose.

During the whole of 2013 a Taser was used against 176 people although there were a total of 221 firings since in some cases more than one Taser was fired at an individual.

There were four instances between January last year and this June in which a Taser was successfully deployed against dogs.

West Midland Police were involved in 84 firearm operations this year up to November 19, during which 61 people were detained.

They escaped with £479 cash after demanding money from the lone woman assistant on duty, revealed Mr David Lees, prosecuting.

Shortly after the September 23 raid, following a tip off, police swooped on the home of the 26-year-old, who had four previous convictions for robbery. The officers found the knife and a small amount of cannabis and amphetamines.

### Benefit

Wroe told detectives that he resorted to crime because he had no benefit money left and was desperate for cash. He declined to identify the other robber for fear of reprisals.

Mr Richard Vardon, defending, said that it must have been 'truly frightening' for the female member of staff but reminded the court that no violence was used by the robbers.

Wroe, of Fisher Street, Brierley Hill, admitted robbery along with possession of controlled drugs and the knife.

He was jailed by Recorder Michael Tregilgas-Davey, who told him: "It is quite clear that when times are hard you turn to committing robberies. The woman working in the bookmakers was terrified by what happened and what you did has had a significant effect on her life."

## Season's Greetings from theatre group



Actors Tony Stamp and Debbie Attwood get ready for a festive fallout in Season's Greetings at Netherton Arts Centre

A FAMILY Christmas goes badly awry in Alan Ayckbourn's comedy Season's Greetings, the latest play being presented by Dudley Little Theatre.

They aim to have audiences in stitches when the black comedy production is staged at Netherton Arts Centre this week.

The production was penned by the playwright back in 1980 and is set over Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day in an English family home, where conflicts arise over the

festive TV viewing and more as family members are forced to spend time with each other.

It opened at Netherton Arts Centre, in Northfield Road, last night and continues until Saturday.

### Masterly

Society spokesman Chris Ridgeway said: "Ayckbourn's masterly comic presentation of the family Christmas truly hits the mark. There are the unwanted relations, guests that you

are not only unsure of but don't have any desire to get to know, the TV and the forced family jollity that makes the festive season such a joyful time to be welcomed and dreaded simultaneously."

Performances are at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £7 and £6 concessions. For tickets call Chris Ridgeway on (01384) 872583 or 07582 318017. Tickets are also available Gary Flavell Butchers in Cradley Road, Netherton, or online at [www.dudleylittletheatre.org](http://www.dudleylittletheatre.org) website.

## Cheese and wine boost for charities

A CHEESE and wine evening has raised hundreds for charities.

The event hosted by the Mayor of Dudley Councillor Margaret Aston brought in more than £300 for her charities, Action Heart at Russells Hall Hospital, and the Guide Dogs charity.

Stourbridge Fairtrade donated a hamper of goodies donated from their members, Sainsbury's Withymoor and Stourbridge Waitrose for Parkinson's UK Dudley. A second hamper will be raffled at the Mayor's Christmas coffee morning on December 12. Call (01384) 815211.

## Beauty ballet to be staged at hall

ROMANTIC ballet Beauty and the Beast is coming to the Black Country this weekend.

Ballet Cymru's production will be staged at Stourbridge Town Hall on Saturday as part of a UK tour.

Ballet Cymru is a young group of dancers who are pushing back the barriers of classical ballet. Using powerful and ti

Ticket cost £16 for adults, £10 for children and a special family ticket for four costs £44.

## Gilbert & Sullivan singers sought

SINGERS are being recruited for Gilbert and Sullivan Gala Evening to be staged at Dudley Town Hall next summer.

The singers will be accompanied by a 16-piece orchestra and musical director Mike Wells is looking for chorus members and soloists. Rehearsals start in February in Kingswinford on Thursday evenings. Contact Mr Wells on (01384) 376999.

## Cheering crowds greet regiment

CHEERING crowds greeted soldiers from the 2nd Battalion Mercian Regiment for a home-coming parade through Kidderminster. More than 80 soldiers marched along the streets as they celebrated their freedom of the town on Sunday.

The parade included Private Derby XXX the ram, the regiment's mascot.

## So Mac-manimous

FAST food giant McDonald's has donated a box full of surplus fruit bags to animals at Dudley Zoo.

The bags of apple slices and grapes are usually given out in children's Happy Meal boxes.

## ADVERTISEMENT

# Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

I'M really trying to get my head around all this Black Friday stuff, but as far as I can see it pretty much boils down to this.

People arrive at the shops two hours before they're due to open during one of the coldest months of the year, and queue outside waiting for the nice security guard to let them in.

Then there is a mad stampede, some people get hurt, some people get arrested, but the lucky ones get a giant all-singing, all-dancing television set with 20 per cent off.

Then the following day they switch on the said television set with its 10ft screen, high definition picture and surround sound. And they watch the X-Factor. No, I don't get it either.

□ □ □

IN HIS weekly newspaper column, social commentator Rod Liddle laid into the man from Birmingham who dialled 999 to ask what the number he should dial if he wanted to call the 101 non-emergency police number.

He wrote: "Look, I don't think Brummies are thick. I'm not one of those snobs who hears someone with a Black Country accent and immediately thinks they got a room-temperature IQ. That's nasty and unjustified."

Be honest. You didn't know he was so broad-minded, did you?

But he is wrong. Very wrong.

Actually, most Brummies do think people with a Black Country accent are thick. It's why they call us 'Yam Yams'.

And if he bothered to look into the matter, he would find that there are no shortage of people in the Black Country who share similar preconceptions about our cousins from the big city. It's why we found Crossroads so funny.

You see Rodders, my old bean, the Black Country and Birmingham are different places. Different places where the locals have a sort of love-hate relationship.

Of course it's unfair, and even in the darkest depths of Darlaston, I suspect that people probably know in their hearts that Brummies are not really that much more stupid than the rest of us.

But let's be honest about these things. It might be 'nasty and unjustified', but it's flipping good fun.

Roderick, I normally enjoy your wit, but next time you want to write about people from the West Midlands, it might be a good idea to check your facts before putting pen to paper. Ask one of your colleagues from this neck of the woods, if you have any.

Because you see, me old mucker, people from Brum don't speak with Black Country accents, they speak with, er, Brummie accents.

Even the Brummies know that. Maybe not the ones who ring 999 to ask what the number for 101 is, but most of them.



The Trust's Carole Freer beside the garden's brick wall



Vandalism in one of the former college classrooms



Phil Baldwin in a greenhouse inside the walled garden

# Bringing a secret garden back to life

**ROB COX** gets a glimpse inside Halesowen's historic walled garden as work on its restoration begins

**HUNDREDS** of years ago 'secret' gardens were a feature of large country houses, growing enough fruit and vegetables to feed the entire household.

An 18th century walled garden in Halesowen has been derelict for several years but campaigners are bringing it back to life as they plan to restore it to its former glory for everyone to see.

They have had their first peek into the overgrown walled garden on the Leasowes Park estate and describe it as 'magical'.

Sadly their first glimpse also revealed other visitors had been in the garden — vandals.

## Damage

On entering the Grade I listed garden members of the Halesowen Abbey Trust, which purchased the garden, found vandals had scaled the walls, smashed windows, ripped up electric cables and even lit fires in the two-acre plot of land.

Yet despite the damage, the garden has retained much of its character and community leaders will let the setback alter their restoration plans.

The garden had previously been used by Stourbridge College as a horticultural education centre but none of its students had been inside for the last two years.

Mick Freer, who headed the purchase on behalf of the Trust, said: "The vandals had ripped up cables, torn out copper piping and put graffiti all over the walls. "They had even damaged the sandstone capping on the walls when they had climbed over to gain entry.

"It was tremendously overgrown but at least we can deal with mother nature. There has been two years of growth since



Phil Baldwin opens the gates to Halesowen's historic 'secret garden'

the college came out. It is quite spectacular what can happen in that time."

The walled garden was historically used to grow vegetables and flowers for the estate, which would have had about 20 family members and servants. It contained greenhouses, a boiler and 'a bothy' where the head gardener would sleep to protect his produce from thieves and wildlife.

It was taken over by the local authority in 1934, before Stourbridge College was given the keys in 1974.

The Trust members say the garden

the garden exists but I am sure local people will get behind the project and want to come and visit.

"It is quite a daunting task and it will be very challenging to get it back to how it used to be. I have no doubt it will be well worth it."

Walled gardens were a feature of 18th and 19th century estates and there are other examples locally at Shugborough Estate, Sandwell Park Farm and at Suggall Hall near Stafford.

Part of the wall's role was to prevent it from encroaching on the views from the house but they also had a much more practical purpose.

Helen Edwards, a warden at the Leasowes park estate, said: "Some of the walls have cavities in them which would have been used to heat the environment for the vegetables. They would light a fire in the cavities allowing them to grow more exotic fruit, such as peaches.

"The walls were really to maintain a decent habitat to keep things like rabbits out which could damage the garden. It would have been a very nice and warm and sheltered spot for growing a whole range of vegetables.

"From our point of view as wardens we definitely welcome the move to reopen the garden to the public. It is a valuable part of our history and would be a fantastic addition to a visitor's experience."

The aim of the trust is to restore the garden, to have the buildings in period, to begin growing fruit and vegetables and to have the whole thing open to the public. There may be allotments available to local residents.

It follows work earlier this year to restore three other historic areas in Leasowes Park, created by poet William Shenstone.

The Trust will be seeking grants and sponsors to help pay for the restoration.

Mr Freer added: "It will be the first time in more than 200 years the garden will be open to the public. The potential of the site is enormous."

## WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

IF all goes well for the new leader of a Black Country council, he won't be in the job that long.

Pete Lowe is to take over the reins at Dudley Council because David Sparks is tied up with chairing the Local Government Association.

But he's also the Labour candidate for Stourbridge at next year's General Election.

If he wins that, he won't be able to juggle being in Parliament most of the week with being leader so would step down.

This assumes Councillor Lowe is confident of winning the marginal seat, of course. But it won't be easy.

Councillor Lowe is clearly highly respected within the Labour ranks, hence running unopposed. And with 42 out of the 72 seats on the council, it is not as though they were short of possible contenders.

If he wins Stourbridge and stands down, it'll mean the council ends up with its third leader in three years.

Ahead of his own selection meeting, Pete Lowe congratulated Mike Wood on being chosen as the Tory candidate for Dudley South, while also urging people to vote for Labour's Natasha Millward in the same tweet.

Dudley South's Tories decided to throw open the selection process to the public, copying the US system of open primaries.

Mr Wood, a councillor for the Dudley borough, was chosen from a shortlist of four with members of the public who live in the constituency invited to register to attend.

The press weren't allowed in but the Tories said 80 people registered and in the end 45 turned up. Labour seized on this as evidence that the party was heading for disaster. We'll have to wait until May to see.

And there was a brave face put on it by the Tories who blamed the cold, miserable November night for people staying in.

Still, it must have been good for the Tory members' egos to know there was at least one Labour member in their midst keeping an eye on proceedings and tweeting about the numbers.

Mike Wood will be replacing Chris Kelly as the Tory candidate. Mr Kelly is standing down as an MP after one term. But the new contender is following Mr Kelly by being a declared Eurosceptic. Mr Wood admits that David Cameron's renegotiation of Britain's relationship with the EU would have to bring a 'fundamental' change for him to want to vote to stay in if the promised referendum goes ahead.

That's going to be an easier position to defend than being pro-EU and pro-referendum.

Labour doesn't want one. The Tories do. But what a mixed message they'd send if they promise to give the public a choice then hope they don't make the 'wrong' one.



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# Concern at Environment Agency record

I REFER to your recent article under the heading 'Trash Mountain Still Stands Tall'.

Your paper has diligently followed the issues that have arisen around the site used by Refuse Derived Fuel for the last few years and highlighted the problems experienced by local residents. Despite the company's director Robert McNaughton being jailed at the end of last year for failing to meet several deadlines for removal of the waste, this site is still an eyesore and is still awaiting clearance.

What action is the Environment

Agency actually taking? They do not currently appear to know if any material has been removed since McNaughton's release— what situation are they monitoring; what progress has been made regarding the sequestration of McNaughton's assets to contribute towards the cost of this clearance, which was earlier estimated to be circa £750,000.

This same agency is in the process of considering the grant of an environmental permit to a company called Clean Power who wish to develop an anaerobic digester and pyrolysis plant

immediately adjacent to the current waste site still occupied by RDF.

One seriously has to question the ability of the Environment Agency to assess the impact of these proposals on the local residents and also to monitor the management and conduct of this new site if it were to be granted the necessary approvals. This is the same government body who were responsible for a total lack of planning in dealing with the flooding of the Somerset Levels earlier this year.

**J CLARKE**  
Brierley Hill

## No excuse for war vengeance

I read in Peter Rhodes' column what I would say was sanctimonious rubbish. War is awful whatever its form, whether it's between Germany and England or factions in Ireland, Syria, Iraq or anywhere else. I remember well the troubles in Ireland and how one side thought when one died that gave them an excuse to kill a dozen on the other.

The same is happening now in Palestine, Syria and Israel. There is nothing wonderful in vengeance Mr Rhodes, just tears and more death. In the 90s we went to France and visited the war graves of soldiers American, British and German. The Americans were very extravagant, the British smart and well organised. The German cemetery was hidden away with three to a grave, no pomp or ceremony. In the centre was a stone memorial which my son translated and I have never forgotten – 'God has the final word'.

**H CAMWELL**  
Tividale

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

Dudley Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
51-53 Queen Street,  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

### E-MAIL

Dudley.chrons@  
expressandstar.co.uk

## Police are a service and not a business

POLICE stations closing, who would have thought the day would come! A police station is meant to offer the confidentiality of seeing a police officer.

This country goes through a financial crisis, suddenly they are of no use. I wonder had there been no crisis would front offices still have to be closed! Do decision makers not realise the public want these facilities and, in my opinion, have the right to have them.

They say modern technology allows people to contact the police and there is no need to attend stations. There are still people who cannot and do not want to understand this modern technology, what about them? If technology is the way to go, why not have it in the front offices and when in a quiet period the staff could take calls from the public.

Closing front offices is the act of business and financial advisors. The police are a service, the public need to have a place to go to in times of distress and trouble. Closing front offices will do two things — there will be a loss of trust, and patrol officers will have to visit home addresses, surely that would be self defeating? In closing these front offices will we have a reduction in the council tax? Why should we pay for something we will no longer have!

**P LOWE**  
Brierley Hill

## Vandals need to know fear

GREAT news regarding the restoration of the walled garden at Leasowes Park. It is a treasure that deserves to be saved and a really useful asset for our children's education.

But how sad once again that such a place has been damaged by vandals. It is a grade one listed area, it is irreplaceable, yet we seem to have become accepting of the fact that anything left without a guard is inevitably going to be vandalised. This makes me think that we need a much stronger deterrent than we have.

When I was growing up we still had the birch. Although seldom used, the threat was enough to keep most boys on the straight and narrow. Obviously we are never going to go back to corporal punishment but maybe there could be some kind of hard physical work.

We need something which is going to be a short sharp shock that will be feared.

**R GWILLIAMS**  
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The Californians — Robbie, Pete, John, Mick



The Crockers — John Oakley (front) with Doug Parker, Graham Hollis, Jake Elcock, Will Hayward, Roy Kent, Chris Groucutt, Ian Sludge Lees and Alan Clee



Big hair — the 1970s have arrived for the Light Fantastic



Wolverhampton band Finders Keepers

# Crock and roll with veterans of the 1960s Black Country music scene

**THEY** spent two decades gigging around the Midlands music scene, from Trysull Country Club to the legendary Lafayette, the musicians who make up Black Country supergroup The Crockers played them all.

For the past three years, the band have played a Christmas show at the Town Hall in Brierley Hill but this year they will be heading back to the city where it all began — Wolverhampton

The Crockers are made up of members of popular bands who played around the Black Country, Birmingham and Staffordshire music scene in the 1960s and 70s, including the The Montanas, Finders Keepers and Light Fantastic.

Despite never becoming a household name in Britain, other than in the West Midlands, The Montanas went on to have a minor hit in the States with You've Got To Be Loved and toured with The Troggs.

## MEMORY LANE

By Jon Pritchard

Jake Elcock, who played bass with Finders Keepers and The Montanas back in the day, said the group are looking forward to the gig at the Wulfrun Hall on Saturday, December 13.

He said: "This is the fourth year we have done this now and we are heading back to Wolverhampton where we all used to play.

"We all kept in touch because we became friends when we were all playing on the scene and then a few years ago we had this idea to play again. I didn't even have a guitar at the time.

"But the show actually sold out, so now we do a Christmas show every year. That's where we got the name from really. We're all getting on a bit so we're old crocks, but it's also a mixture of Christmas rockers, which is what we do."

The band is made up of Alan Clee, a lead

guitarist with Finders Keepers, Roy 'Dripper' Kent who was on vocals for Finders Keepers but also performed with Light Fantastic. Graham Hollis and Will Hayward both played with The Montanas, while John Oakley was the saxophonist for Revival.

Comedian Ian "Sludge" Lees, former singer with Light Fantastic and ex-member of The Montanas and The Telstars, will also perform with John O'Hara, vocalist with The Californians, and Graham Bunt, guitarist with Tommy.

All of the band still live locally, in Wolverhampton. Gornal, Dudley and Sedgley, and Mr Elcock said they were looking forward to playing back in Wolverhampton.

Mr Elcock added: "We used to play venues like the Lafayette, Park Hall and the Cleveland Arms, which back then had live

music on about five nights a week.

"There were some great bands that played back then and the music scene was really good. Back in the 60s and 70 you could go out seven nights a week and there would always be four of five different venues with acts on.

"I remember we used to go to Trysull Country Park on a Tuesday and it wouldn't finish until 2am, and then we all had to get up and go to work then next morning. It was a very exciting time."

The Crockers play a mixture of 60s classics from The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and The Kinks, as well as songs by The Montanas, such as Ciao Baby and Let's Get a Little Sentimental.

There will also be entertainment from comedian Doug Parker, and David Essex tribute act Chris Knott to get the crowd going.

Tickets can be bought from [www.wolves-civic.co.uk](http://www.wolves-civic.co.uk) or by calling 0870 320 7000.

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- Figaro Olives with Pimentos, 142g
- Mackays Cranberry Sauce, 227g
- Gardiners Malt Whiskey Fudge, 150g
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# Organisers celebrate Black Country success



Mayor of Dudley Margaret Aston with Gracie Sheppard and other guests at the civic reception for festival organisers

**THEY banged the drum for the bostin' Black Country and now those behind the festival celebrating its heritage have been honoured.**

Tens of thousands of people joined in the Black Country Festival celebrations in July with dozens of events.

Those who were involved in making the summer celebration happen have been honoured at a civic reception in Dudley. Among those invited by Mayor of Dudley Councillor Marg-

aret Aston were Gracie Sheppard, the Stourbridge schoolgirl who designed the Black Country flag, and James Stevens, who created a Black Country anthem for the event.

All of the attendees at the Mayor's Parlour were presented with a certificate and Gracie was also presented with a framed picture of her design flying in various locations across the borough.

"To be invited in to see the Mayor has rounded off an unbelievable year," she said. "From seeing the flag flown from Dudley Town Hall back in January and then seeing all the flags at the

festival in July, it has been an amazing experience.

"It has been really nice to come here today and see everyone who was involved in the festival. Next year I'm sure it will be bigger and better and I'm really looking forward to it."

The festival featured a Black Country themed Stourbridge Carnival; a three-day festival of comedy, culture and music at Red House Glass Cone; an all day event on Stone Street Square in Dudley and a performance by the Fizzogs comedy group at Brierley Hill Civic Hall. It culminated in official Black Country Day on July 14.

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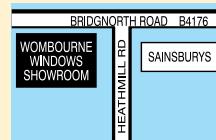
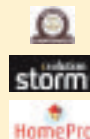
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## Consultation on boundaries

A PETITION signed by hundreds of people calling on a review of boundaries around Hagley and Clent has prompted a new consultation.

Officials from Bromsgrove District Council launched the consultation following pressure from some resident sin West Hagley. Hagley Residents Action Group petitioned households in West Hagley currently represented by Clent Parish Council. They want to see local governance transferred to Hagley Parish Council.

Four options have been drawn up for the consultation. Public drop in sessions will be held at Hagley Parish Council, in Worcester Road, on Saturday between 9am and 11am and on December 10 from 5.30pm to 7pm.



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# One in four pensioners facing struggle to live independently

**MORE than a quarter of pensioners in the West Midlands experience difficulties living independently, new figures show.**

A report from Independent Age and the Strategic Society Centre shows 27 per cent (245,000) of those aged 65 and over in the region struggle with tasks such as cooking, dressing, or bathing.

The Bigger Picture report provides a detailed picture of disability and care needs among England's older population. It aims to help councils and care providers to get ready for the Care Act, which comes into effect in April and places new duties on local authorities to offer more help to older people and their carers.

The research looks at levels of unmet need for social care, analyses publicly funded support to the over 65's and considers levels of entitlement to care following the introduction of the Care Act.

Simon Bottery, Director of Policy at Independent Age said: "The Care Act is intended to ensure that older people receive better care and support but this new research highlights alarming gaps even in existing levels of care.

"Councils need to be acting now if the promises of the Care Act are to be fulfilled but national government also has to ensure that there is enough funding to properly implement it. We need to properly fund preventative services which delay the moment when older people need more intensive care and support."

The report shows nationally almost half a million older carers provide round the clock care to a loved one but more than 80 per cent do not receive any council services, and 70,000 of the most disabled pensioners do not get any form of care at home. More information is available at [straticsociety.org.uk](http://straticsociety.org.uk) website.

## Heathens plan to help fans travel

CRADLEY Heathens Speedway Club is working on travel arrangements to make it easier for fans to reach their new home in Birmingham.

The club is keen for as many fans as possible to attend Perry Barr Stadium for their 2015 season. It comes after Heathens were told they could no longer use Wolverhampton's Monmore Green for 2015, their temporary home for the last four years.

Heathens have been unable to find a location in Dudley borough to build a new stadium since losing its Dudley Wood home.

Club chairman Nigel Pearson has criticised Dudley Council for not doing enough to help but the council said it carried out 'extensive searches' without success. Monmore Green is the home of Elite League Wolverhampton.

## Trolleybus brought back to use



Volunteer Gordon Ibbotson, 77, with fellow members of the transport group at the museum

**Volunteer Gordon Ibbotson, 77, with fellow members of the transport group at the museum**

RUSTED and rotting, the number 735 Karrier W trolleybus was in dire need of a new lease of life. But now, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Black Country Living Museum's Transport Group, the vehicle, built in 1946, is back to its best.

The volunteers have spent the past three years restoring the bus and painting it from blue and cream to the two shades of blue it would have sported back in its heyday.

The bus, the same model as used in the Black Country in the 1930s and 40s, is on loan from Colin Saxton from the Bradford Trolleybus Association, who bought it at a bus rally back back in the 1980s.

Chairman of the transport group Lynton Cooper said: "We came to the museum twice a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays, when we work on painting the bus for around seven to eight hours a day.

"We have only used paint brushes to do the work which is why it has taken us so long but we are really pleased with how it is looking."

The trolleybus will start running next year on the museum's line, which is the world's longest route for double decker trolleys. It will run on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

This bus is also important as its transfers are the last created by Stan Letts, a member of the group from the 1980s, and a principal organiser of bus and tramway societies across the West Midlands until his death in April. Mr Letts was nationally recognised for his intricate transfers, which can be seen on the 735. Mr Cooper added: "Stan would have been so proud to see the bus finished. It is a shame that he will not be here to see the trolley running."

## Meeting offers help to private landlords

PRIVATE landlords can get advice to help them with their businesses at a forum on Monday afternoon.

The event will give them the chance to learn about current developments, legislative changes and issues affecting landlords and tenants, including the new immigration rules and welfare reforms.

It is open to landlords in Sandwell and Dudley and is free to attend.

It has been organised by Dudley Council in partnership with Sandwell Council and the National Landlords Association.

The event will start at 3.30pm at The Recreation Club, Station Road, Oldbury.

It is hoped that the forum will become a regular event and that landlords will become actively involved in contributing to the agenda. The event will last around three hours and refreshments will be provided.

## Apprentice for lottery

COMPTON Hospice Promotions has welcomed its first ever apprentice to its Lottery Company.

Luke Pinder, 20, from Wordsley, has joined the hospice as part of a year-long Business Administration Apprenticeship scheme run in conjunction with the City of Wolverhampton College.

The scheme will give Luke the opportunity to gain valuable workplace skills and experience through paid employment whilst studying for a recognised qualification at the same time.

## A snapshot of Charterfield Shopping Centre

Stallings Lane, Kingswinford

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## Have a say on health at forum

PATIENTS can have their say on health services at a forum being held on Thursday, December 11.

The ‘Putting You in the Driving Seat’ event is being held by Dudley CCG. It will run from noon until 2.30pm at Brierley Hill Civic Hall.

People will be able to share their views with doctors and bosses during the event.

Dr Steve Mann, Clinical Executive and GP, from Dudley CCG, said “We make policy decisions every week that affect healthcare in Dudley, this session will use a real example of policy decision making and put you in the driving seat, playing the role of key board members to give you a real insight on the process and how decisions are made.

“We will facilitate an interactive decision making workshop, and then share our board members own views on it.”

To book a place at the event call Clare Hamilton on (01384) 321764.

# Borough is worst for fuel poverty in the Black Country

**TENS of thousands of households across the rewgion are living in fuel poverty and struggling to keep their homes heated, new figures have revealed.**

In the Black Country 63,579 properties out of 384,987 homes cannot afford their fuel bills.

The data has been released by Age UK as part of their Warm Homes campaign against fuel poverty, warning 24,000 older people could die because of the cold.

The figures include all households, regardless of their occupants’ age and were worked out based on the household income. Someone is

classed as fuel poor if they would spend so much of their earnings to heat their home it would take them below the poverty line.

In some areas between one in 10 and almost one in five homes are classed as being fuel poor.

Dudley has the highest number of fuel poor households in the area with 19,731 out of 137,166 properties. That’s just above Wolverhampton with 19,057 homes in fuel poverty out of 104,949 — though given the city’s smaller population, the proportion is worse with 18.2 per cent of homes affected compared with Dudley’s 14.4 per cent.

Sandwell has 11, 341 out of 68,925 homes in such poverty, which is 16.5 per cent.

MP for Dudley North Ian Austin said: “Lots of families in the Black Country are struggling

to make ends meet. Wages here are below the national average and bills keep going up, with energy bills rocketing by £300 in the last four years.

“For more than one in ten homes in the Black Country things are so bad that heating bills are pushing them into poverty.

“I want energy bills to be frozen while we get long-term solutions in place like scrapping Ofgem (The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) and getting thousands of homes in Dudley insulated.”

Caroline Abrahams of Age UK said: “No older person should worry that they could die from the cold in their own home. Fuel poverty is a national scandal which has claimed the lives of too many people for far too long”

## Lynx are loving zoo’s woodchip

A CARPATHIAN lynx family are rolling around in joy after their paddock was re-vamped with woodchip from Dudley Zoo’s recycled trees.

As part of the attraction’s ongoing site management trees at the end of their natural life have been taken down around the 40-acre site. And not a bit has been wasted, with leaves and branches used to feed our giraffe, tapir and Barbary sheep families and the remainder used to make woodchip for the lynx paddock.

Team Leader Jay Haywood,said the lynx family, Dave, Daisy and triplets Dick, Dom and Daphne, were loving playing in their new-look home. He said: “In a big cat, the part of the brain that processes smells is vast and when they smell different scents they can release happy hormones. They have started rubbing and rolling in the woodchip.”

## Strings orchestra with a difference



Professional banjo player Danielle Saxon Reeves from Lye

A MUSICIAN is preparing to host a concert backed by the community music group she founded more than a decade ago.

Danielle Saxon Reeves, of Lye, is staging the show on Saturday with the Midlands Fretted Orchestra.

The orchestra, which has members from across the West Midlands, will feature special guests at their annual Christmas Celebration show at the Bonded Warehouse, in Canal Street, Stourbridge.

The In Sound Company Community Choir will be joining the orchestra.

The orchestra brings together acoustic instruments seldom found in other ensembles, such as mandolin, banjo, bass and steel guitars.

A host of seasonal favourites will be played including music by Prokofiev as well as Christmas carols.

Tickets are £6.50 with under 16s free if accompanied by a paying adult. To book call 07738 258506. Doors and bar open at 7pm and the concert begins at 7.30pm. For more information about the orchestra call (01384) 893987.

## More free childcare places are on offer

MORE than 18,000 toddlers in the West Midlands are accessing free childcare, new figures show.

The Government offers free childcare to two year olds from low income families, and has doubled the number of available places to include 40 per cent of families.

Childcare and education minister Sam Gyimah has launched a campaign encouraging parents to check their eligibility.

Mr Gyimah said: “The early years count which is why making sure parents have access to affordable, high quality education is part of our plan for education. I know that childcare costs can be a real burden for some parents and am pleased to see so many parents in the West Midlands taking up the free childcare offered for their two-year-old.

“I want every parent in the West Midlands to look at the Government support on offer and access whatever you can.”

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# Songsters and guests get ready for concert



Gentleman Songsters, school singers from Wall Heath and brass band musicians are rehearsing for the festive concert

**THAT festive feeling is on its way to Dudley Town Hall as the Gentlemen Songsters Choir gets ready to perform its Christmas charity concert.**

Rehearsals for the Saturday, December 13, concert are already in full swing and this year the Dudley borough's male voice choir will be joined by special guests Sovereign Brass.

The event at Dudley Town Hall will raise money for the Mayor of Dudley's chosen charities.

The Songsters will also be joined on stage by the children's choir from the School of the Church of the Ascension, Wall Heath, where the Songsters first formed back in 1957.

## Favourites

Hosting the concert will be Annie Hodgkinson, who has had leading roles with Brierley Hill Musical Theatre Company.

The Songsters say they are looking forward to thrilling the crowd with a wide variety of seasonal favourites that will be sure to get the audience into the festive spirit.

The Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Margaret Aston, will be at the event and all proceeds from the concert will be donated to her chosen charities.

These include Action Heart, the heart cardiac rehabilitation centre based in Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital, and Guide Dogs, formally known as the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

The concert will start at 7.30pm and tickets are priced at £10 each with reserved seating.

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# Black Country man who won over a Welsh town

## Author opens library



Author Piers Torday with Year 7 pupils officially opening Kingswinford School's modern new library

AN AWARD-WINNING author launched a new school library in Dudley. Students at The Kingswinford School welcomed writer Piers Torday to open the facility.

The author, whose second novel *The Dark Wild* won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize 2014, led workshops throughout the day for students in Years Seven, Eight and 11. School librarian, Paula Hendey, said: "We were so excited to meet Piers because students and teachers thoroughly enjoyed his first novel *The Last Wild*. We fully expect him to become a star in the literacy firmament and he is such an engaging speaker too."

The new library, completed this summer, contains more than 2,000 books and has been one of the final stages in major development work that upgraded the school to academy status.

IT was nid yw cefnogaeth i lawr — or no backing down — from a proud Black Country man as he took the chairmanship of a Welsh council.

Being the first Englishman to take the honour, Bernard Shaw faced a rebellion by Welsh speakers on Porthmadog Town Council but, determined to hear all views, he brought in a translator to help him communicate with his more stubborn colleagues.

The father-of-two, originally from Wordsley, eventually won over fellow members of the council at the Welsh harbour town and became a popular member of the community.

### Tax

Tributes have been paid to Mr Shaw, who died last week aged 82, after a battle against lung cancer.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years Hazel, his two children, Rebecca and Joanne, and four grandchildren.

Mr Shaw was a former head boy of Dudley Grammar School who did his National Service with The Green Howards in Germany.

As a child his family moved to Clarendon Road, Sedgley, and after school got job at the Inland Revenue in Dudley before becoming an inspector of taxes at Wolverhampton.

Mr Shaw was transferred to the Inland Revenue's office in Porthmadog and the family then started a new life in Wales, setting up



Bernard Shaw — proud of his Black Country roots

home in village of Borthy-Gest. He later set up his own tax consultancy business. In 1974 he was elected to Porthmadog Town Council. Five years later he was elected as chairman of the council.

His brother-in-law Graham Gough said: "Even though he lived for many years in Wales he was still proud of his Black Country roots."



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## Heat on as Heaton carries on regardless

**Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbot  
Civic Hall, Wolverhampton**

IT was a night of nostalgia, elephant wee, a rather unsavoury tale of Paul Heaton's, and trying to prise him out of his parka.

Even with the temperature reaching sauna levels through the solid wall of bodies packed into the Civic Hall and the shouts of "off off" couldn't separate Heaton from his jacket so the assembled mass had to make do

with the music which is now part of pop history. Heaton via the Housemartins and then The Beautiful South has been on the scene for more than a quarter of a century with Jacqui Abbot not far behind him.

The duo walked in over the drumbeat and launched into a couple of tracks off their latest album, What Have We Become, with Moulding of a Fool and The Right in Me. They then took their first trip down memory lane

with We're Not Deep from Heaton's Housemartins days.

The crowd lapped up the old stuff with their cover of Everybody's Talking, the expletive ridden Don't Marry Her and of course Carry On Regardless.

Heaton even threw in a spoiler as they are Pointless celebrities on December 13 but you have to watch it to see how they did.

**Danny Farragher**

## Got to give Erasure a little respect

**Erasure, Civic Hall,  
Wolverhampton**

AFTER nearly 30 years in the business, you have to give A Little Respect to Erasure.

The duo have re-invented themselves for 21st century audiences, hence Sacred (from new album The Violet Flame) sounding like it could be by Calvin Harris rather than Vince Clarke. Latest single Reason, Elevation and Dead of Night were also from the new album.

Singer Andy Bell came out on stage wearing hat, jacket and shades but he later changed into spangly hot pants. He loves a good Drama! So did I. And Blue Savannah. And Ship of Fools. The latter demonstrated that Clarke is not just a whizz on the keyboards as he played guitar, repeating the feat for final encore Sometimes.

From the opening Oh L'Amour, the sell-out crowd were clearly in for a top night. Pretty much all the hits were there, Victim of Love, Chains of Love, Stop! and Love To Hate You among them.

**Mark Shipp**

## REVIEWS



First Soloist Samara Downs leaps into action as The Snow Fairy in The Nutcracker

## Enchanting festive ballet just gets better and better

**The Nutcracker,  
Birmingham Hippodrome**

IN the 24 years since Sir Peter Wright's version of the classic Russian ballet received its premiere in Birmingham, this Christmas treat from Birmingham Royal Ballet has just got better and better.

It begins with an idealised Christmas and ballet student Clara has a wildly imaginative dream. The scene in which Clara is shrunk by the growing Christmas tree is spectacular. Then she is whisked away in a blizzard of dancing snowflakes to an enchanted land of dance. Tchaikovsky's romantic music with opulent costumes and

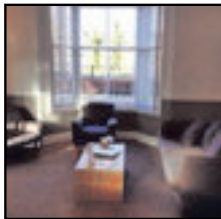
monumental sets that radiate a faded grandeur, all dramatically lit, create an otherworldly atmosphere.

On Saturday Laura Purkiss ensured Clara was never lost amid the spectacle. Samara Downs brought verve to The Snow Fairy and Spanish dancer, Delia Matthews was liquid lithe in the supple Arabian Dance, whilst Momoko Hirata combined grace and strength as The Rose Fairy.

The star couple were Celine Gittens and Tyrone Singleton, as the Sugar Plum Fairy and Prince. Their Grand pas de deux was elegant and powerful. The Nutcracker continues until December 13. **LB**

### ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

# New Stourbridge funeral home opens



INDEPENDENT and family-run funeral directors J Vernon Kendrick have expanded by opening a new funeral home in Stourbridge.

Founded in 1931, the company is owned and operated by the Kendrick family, now in its third generation, and prides itself on offering a caring, personal service during a difficult and challenging time for loved ones.

Located at 11 Greenfield Avenue, formerly Greenfield Surgery, the new branch is a fully equipped funeral home with chapels of rest, a refreshment lounge and car parking. It is open between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday and a 24 hour telephone service is also available.

The firm's head office is still located at Vernon House, Cemetery Road, Lye, where it has been based for over 70 years and continues to serve Lye, Wollescote and surrounding areas.

Director Daniel Kendrick: "We have been wanting to open in Stourbridge to service clients from areas including Norton,

Oldswinford, Amblecote and Wollaston for some time but needed to make sure that the location was suitable for our requirements with easy access for local families."

A member of the National Association of Funeral Directors and the Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors, the company provides a professional and tailor-made service, guiding clients through all aspects of the funeral arrangements, including burial or cremation and the choice of coffin and funeral cars.

In-house refreshments including tea, coffee and soft drinks and a selection of sandwiches and savouries and homemade scones can be served in the refreshment lounge on request.

For those who prefer the independence and peace of mind of deciding for themselves how they would like their funeral to be arranged when the eventual need arises, pre-payment plans are available.

**J. Vernon Kendrick**



**The Stourbridge branch is located at 11 Greenfield Avenue, Stourbridge DY8 1SU  
and can be contacted on 01384 442111.**

**All are welcome to call in to meet the staff and look around the facilities.**



# Dan's songs get back to the raw

**MUSICIAN** Dan Whitehouse talks to **DANNY FARRAGHER** about his music and the evolution of his new album

IT only took 10 days to lay down but Wolverhampton singer/songwriter Dan Whitehouse's latest album has been maturing for years.

Whitehouse, originally from Compton in the city, now works from the centre of Birmingham.

He has spent most of the last three years touring and building a steady reputation as a stand-out musician who takes his music very seriously.

"My song writing is always at the centre of my focus and that's what I spend the most time on. It's what makes me happy and is what drives me; keeps me in a positive mind-set. Life is not worth living without music."

His latest album, Raw State, which was released on Monday and is officially launched at the Glee Club, Birmingham on Sunday, is not new in the conventional sense. There is only one fresh track but it has, according to Whitehouse, evolved as a process of his touring.

## Textures

"When we recorded the first few records they were written in the studio and we used multi-tracking and layering to add lots of textures and then I went and did two or three years touring those songs."

"During that time I felt the songs really took on a new form and evolved so then I felt like I had reached a point where I could walk into a studio and lay down raw versions of them."

"I think it brings a kind of vibrancy



Dan Whitehouse will be launching his new album, Raw State, at the Glee Club

and life and energy something akin to what you might get from the live show."

"This is an album I have carved out. It's like a sculpture that has taken five years and this is the end result. I started out with a big lump of rock and now I am really proud of that sculpture, it's kind of distorted and imperfect but I am really proud of it."

So is the process ever fully finished for him?

"No, I am always hungry and looking for the next level. There are always other places to go, that's the great thing about music there are always people who inspire and there are always more things to learn and more

things to discover. I try not rest on my laurels because I still feel there are songs I want to write and still places, artistically, that I haven't ventured into."

Whitehouse has been touring mostly with New York singer, author and poet Simone Felice who he met through the Glee Club and now things seem to have come full circle now for him.

"This gig at the Glee is the biggest capacity venue I have ever played, it can hold more than 400 so is very ambitious."

"It's going to be a kind of Christmas extravaganza with special guests."

Raw State is out on Heantun Records visit [www.dan-whitehouse.com](http://www.dan-whitehouse.com).

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## Disappearance has become a murder inquiry

DETECTIVES were this week continuing their search of a property in the Black Country after launching a murder inquiry following the disappearance of a Romanian-born woman.

Police say 26-year-old Lydia Pascale is still missing, however detectives are now treating her disappearance as a murder inquiry. A man from West Bromwich has appeared in court accused of her murder, while officers continue to question another man.

A property in High Street, Wes Bromwich, remained sealed off this week as part of the investigation while forensic teams carried out searches of the scene.

Matthew Cherrington, aged 32, was charged with

killing Lydia Pascale on Sunday, Cherrington, of High Street, West Bromwich, was not required to enter a plea during a brief hearing at Birmingham Magistrates' Court earlier this week. Another hearing was due to place at the city's crown court yesterday (Wednesday).

Officers are continuing to question a 37-year-old man from Wolverhampton on suspicion of murdering Ms Pascale after officers secured an extension for 36 more hours of questioning.

Relatives of Ms Pascale, who was 26 and had been in the UK for around a year, have been informed of the developments.

Contact police on 101 or information can be given anonymously on 0800 555111.

# Council promising 'robust' response to horse problem

**THEY are left to fend for themselves on verges and scrubland, chained to trees and stakes in all weathers. Sometimes left to die.**

Allowing horses to graze in public area may seem like a victimless crime, but council bosses and animal welfare charities claim these animals are not only a risk to themselves and the public, but have often been abandoned by owners.

The act of leaving horses to graze on someone else's land is known as fly-grazing - and is illegal. It is an issue which has long plagued the Black Country.

Sandwell councillor Ian Jones said many of the horses are owned by descendants of travellers living in the Black Country. He said: "There have been cases of horses frozen to the spot quite literally by their chain."

"We have had fly-grazed horses

By Robert Cox

choking on their chains and they have had to be rescued. There are some responsible horse owners but some with no sense of responsibility toward these animals."

Both Sandwell and Dudley Councils have been trying to tackle the problem - spending thousands of pounds contracting bailiffs to round up hundreds of horses from council land. Since 2011, Dudley Council has spent £100,000 on removing them.

Dudley environment boss Councillor Hilary Bills said: "Since 2011 there have been more than 460 horses taken from the public highway, reducing the risk to pedestrians, motorists and horses alike, and this service is seen as a model system nationwide. The council also regularly monitors the numbers of horses illegally fly grazing on council owned land and periodically takes action through a separate retained horse bailiff with specific targeted impoundment activity."

The most recent action in Dudley was taken in October when two horses were seized from council-owned land off Bryce Road, in Brierley Hill.

The council also posts enforcement notices at certain locations. These warn anyone who may leave their horses on council-owned land that their horses may be impounded.

It also works with organisations such as the RSPCA to address a range of issues, and other animal welfare charities to promote equine passporting and chipping events.

Councillor Bills said that the problem is worse in winter. She added: "The number of horses left in poor condition by irresponsible owners can increase in the winter months, however, we adopt a robust monitoring regime to help address animal welfare concerns across the borough"

## Lottie up to monkey business at park



Little Lottie, the latest baby Douroucouli born at West Midland Safari Park, snuggles up with father Ilay

NOW that the weather has turned chilly, there's one baby at West Midland Safari Park that will be staying cosy.

Little Lottie is the newest baby Douroucouli, otherwise known as Night Monkey or Owl Monkey, to be born in Twilight Cave, which is also home to free-flying fruit bats.

Lottie is the second Douroucouli to be born at the park. Barney was the first, arriving in November last year. Just like Barney, it is quite likely that Little Lottie will be seen on father Ilay's back, as Douroucouli mothers generally relinquish their role after a few weeks.

West Midlands Safari Park spokeswoman Wendy Jackson said there is still some uncertainty whether Lottie is male or female. She said: "It was the extraordinary prettiness of the baby that prompted the more feminine term, but it is still a case of wait and see."

Lottie and family can be seen in the Twilight Cave every weekend during the Wild Winter season up to Sunday, February 8 and daily until Christmas Eve.

## Coach firm are to spend £34m on British buses

NATIONAL Express will spend £34 million on 171 new British built buses in the West Midlands.

It will include 58 state-of-the-art two tone grey and black Platinum vehicles. These will have drivers in suites and run on premium routes with new bus shelters carrying real time information, and bus priority traffic arrangements.

The bulk of the fleet will have a distinctive fresh livery in a two tone maroon with cream lines.

The investment will meet the pledge made by the Transforming Bus Partnership involving public transport co-ordinator Centro

and National Express that 300 new buses would be introduced in two years up to the end of 2015.

Peter Coates, managing director of National Express West Midlands, said: "These new vehicles will ensure that hundreds of thousands of our customers have smoother, cleaner and more enjoyable journeys. The buses, which are built in the UK, will have more comfortable seats, better lighting and crystal clear CCTV."

Centro boss Councillor John McNicholas said: "The vast majority of journeys made by public transport in the West Midlands are by bus which is why this record investment in new vehicles is to be welcomed."

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# Get your skates on for thrill rides



Gabriel Nijie tests out the new skatepark at Mill Race Lane

A LONG-AWAITED skate and BMX park has opened in Stourbridge with hundreds of eager riders flocking through the doors at what could become a major attraction for the whole West Midlands.

Unit3Sixty is a dream come true for firefighter Gavin Pardoe, a crew commander for West Midlands Fire Service, who has been working on the £200,000 project for more than 15 months.

The centre which has been created in a former industrial unit in Mill Race Lane offers facilities for

Stourbridge is now a location of one of the UK's top indoor skate parks, Heather Large reports

BMX riding, skateboarding and scooter riding. It is one of the biggest parks in the country.

Saturday's official opening saw more than 200 people visit the centre, which also hosted an all-night event with live DJ's playing from 8pm until 8am.

## Positive

Mr Pardoe said it was great to see his dream come to fruition and said feedback so far had been 'very positive'.

"It's been really encouraging," said Mr Pardoe. "There is a big

skateboarding following in Stourbridge town and in the borough of Dudley too, so there has been a lot of support."

The official opening was carried out by Councillor Pete Lowe who has supported the project since the early stages.

He said it was an 'absolute pleasure' to unveil the centre, adding: "We are all so proud of what we now have in Stourbridge."

Other activities planned within the 22,000 sq ft base include graffiti art studios, an urban dance centre and DJ classes. Ten part-time and volunteer roles have also been created as part of the work.

Ideas for the park came following calls for new facilities after the closure of the popular Ramparts skate park. The scheme has been made possible thanks to funding from a number of organisations. They include £10,000 from council-run community forums and a £75,000 loan from Charity Bank.

Tesco, Waitrose and the Ryemarket in Stourbridge and Black Country businessman Geoff Hill have also supported the scheme which won the backing of the town's MP Margot James. She said: "I am absolutely delighted for Gavin and his team who, through sheer hard work and dedication, have built a magnificent new skate park."



A skateboarder in action at the new indoor park in Stourbridge



Pete Lowe and MP Margot James watch stunt rider Josh Cox



BMX stunt rider Josh Cox shows our photographer a clean pair of wheels

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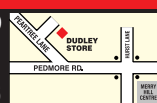
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# Possible rise in fees is discussed

Wollaston E TWG

FIFTY one members plus two visitors attended the November meeting which began with a request from the chairman for a minute's silence to observe the anniversary of Armistice Day.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read, followed by the treasurer's and sub-section reports. Owing to the bad weather, the ambling group's walks had been curtailed a little, but they had made up for it by using nearby cafes for up-to-date chatter.

There is a talk from the Federation of a suggested trip to Liverpool next year. It also appears that the Federation wishes to increase membership fees which is likely to mean a change in the guild's own membership fees.

The likely increase was put to members for their opinions, and resulted in some lively and interesting comments. The final decision will be made by the chairman and treasurer.

The speaker for the evening was Ms J Smith who gave an interesting talk on Nova Chocolates. While passing around small samples of different chocolate, she gave an insight into the background behind the introduction of this product.

Secretary Sue Ward had a go at making a chocolate lollipop and made a good job of it. Competition winners were Peggy Homer and Elizabeth Grove. Raffle prizes went to Joan Brooks and Ann Powell.

The December 9 meeting will incorporate the Christmas party.

# Flower arranging art demonstrated



Janet Hough, one of the winners of a flower arrangement at the November meeting

THE Federation Black Country Night on November 14 was a great success thanks to the organisational skills of the committee, who made sure everyone was served with the delicious fagots, mash & peas supplied by 'Eatso' of Pelsall.

An hour of funny monologues, gossip and recollections including memories of a childhood spent in Quarry Bank, by Marlene the Black Country wench, rounded off a very successful evening.

The guild meeting on November 20 commenced with thanks to Ann Sale and Irene Williams for laying a poppy wreath on behalf of the Guild at Pelsall Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. A short break for

## Pelsall 'E' TG

a mince pie and drink followed before the introduction of the speaker for the evening, Doris Halifax. She gave an inspiring demonstration in the art of flower arranging by performing wonders with greenery and a lovely selection of flowers to depict the Christmas story in five beautiful arrangements, which were later raffled.

The meeting on Thursday, December 18 will the traditional Christmas buffet donated by members, followed by a quiz and Christmas raffle.

## County chairman steps down

FOLLOWING the singing of Jerusalem, president Julie Hammersley greeted all members and visitors with a special welcome to Denise Morton who has recently stepped down after many years as county chairman for South Staffs Federation.

The usual business was dealt with as well as the finalising of the Christmas

## Bilbrook WI

meal at Essington Fruit Farm and Christmas party. Denise was presented with a card and plant from the members of Bilbrook WI.

Julie introduced speaker Kasie Woods from Boots No 7. She had also brought her diary for anyone who

would like to book a complementary facial. This was followed by question time and Julie thanked Casie for a very interesting afternoon.

The December meeting is the Christmas party. In January, Patricia Boyd will talk on "What the Butler Saw" and in February, Patzie Jarman on "Adventisements of Bygone Times".

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## Police enlist academic help

WEST Midlands Police is turning to the academic world to come up with new ways of cutting crime and anti-social behaviour. The force has established an in-house Academic Research Team (ART) to cement relationships with regional universities but also extend its reach to other education centres across the UK.

The Universities of Cambridge, Birmingham, Liverpool and Huddersfield, plus specialist colleges like the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science, are some of those currently engaged on research projects for West Midlands Police. But the ART team is also looking to capitalise on studies undertaken by its own officers and staff - typically those writing PhD or Masters theses - by adopting findings with potential to improve efficiency, cut crime or enhance public service levels.

Inspector Richard Harris said: "There are 112 pieces of research going on in the force, everything from simple surveys to long-term collaborative work with universities."

## Store proposal has raised fears for pub's future

**A £1 MILLION plan to build a convenience store on the car park of a landmark Cradley Heath pub has been unveiled.**

Up to 20 jobs could be created by the business which would be built alongside the Haden Cross in Halesowen Road. New River Retail has submitted the proposals for the development to Sandwell Council.

The planning application says it is expected that the new store would be operated by The Co-operative Group.

But the scheme, which includes a car park with 13 spaces, has sparked concerns from councillors who fear it could threaten the future of the popular pub.

Planning consultant Thomas Hallett said the store would be built alongside the pub, and there are no plans to alter the pub itself as part of current proposals.

He said: "This full planning application seeks to create a local food store incorporating an ATM machine on part of the under-used car park adjacent to the existing public house along with associated car parking, cycle storage, plant and bin storage areas."

### Demolished

"A double garage will also be demolished to the rear of the Haden Cross public house to facilitate the reconfiguration of the car park."

Ward councillor John Tipper said he and fellow councillor Anne Shackleton shared concerns about the scheme and was contacting residents for their views.

"The Haden Cross is a community asset so we want to make sure it is protected. There is only a limited number of parking spaces at the Haden Cross so there are worries about where people are going to park."

A lot of people are unhappy about it and they are worried it could be the final nail in the coffin of the pub."

### Real reindeer

REAL reindeer will be delighting visitors to Webbs Garden Centre at West Hagley in the run up to Christmas. The animals will be on site to meet visitors on weekends, starting on Saturday, and from December 22 to December 24.

## Choir sing at town centre craft market

THE sound of music will be ringing out in Dudley as part of festive celebrations.

Cradley Heath youth choir, Pure Harmony, has been confirmed to perform at the Small Business Saturday Christmas market in the town centre.

The performance will take place at 2pm on Saturday, when children aged between eight and 16 will perform a mixture of show and seasonal songs.

The market is a one-off festive event for people who make items from their homes. Goods on sale will range from cakes and jewellery to crafts and furniture. As well as providing a unique shopping opportunity, other activities will include street entertainment. The market will run from 10am to 4pm at Stone Street Square, next to the town's Christmas tree. There will be free parking in Dudley town centre and across the borough at all council car parks on Saturday, also December 13 and 20.

## Students to revamp building for college



Students who will be refurbishing a former residential home

CONSTRUCTION students in Stourbridge are taking part in a working project to restore a former college building.

Students on the construction and built environment course at Stourbridge College Advanced Technology Centre are helping bring a site next door to the college back to life.

The students, based at Brierley Hill, will carry out a full refurbishment before the building goes on the market. Executive director of estates, at Birmingham Metropolitan College, John Starmer, said: "The White House, based next door to the Stourbridge College, was a former residential home which has been used as offices for a number of years."

"To support the students to obtain skills in a real working environment we are asking that, as part of their course work, they undertake the internal refurbishment of the building in order for the use to put it on the market for sale, which is an excellent opportunity for them to get some 'live' work experience."

## Inquest is adjourned

THE inquest of a 22-year-old man from Brierley Hill who died in a car crash has been opened and adjourned.

Mr John Ellery, coroner for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, said because a person had been charged in relation to the tragedy, the inquest would reopen once court proceedings had ended.

Joshua Jones, of Brierley Hill, died in a car crash at Sutton Hill, Telford. The Vauxhall Astra he was travelling in was involved in a crash on March 15.



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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<b>MUST BE SOLD</b>	Full single size fully sprung single mattress. 4 only	<b>SAVE 50%</b> <b>£29</b>	<b>MUST BE SOLD</b>	Full double size top quality Orthopaedic mattress. 2 only	<b>SAVE 50%</b> <b>£79</b>	<b>MUST BE SOLD</b>	Full king size top quality hyperallergenic dustmite resistant	<b>SAVE 60%</b> <b>£139</b>	<b>MUST BE SOLD</b>	Assembled 1mtr wide Cream/Oak Colour Sliding Wardrobe Ex Display	<b>SAVE 50%</b> <b>£149</b>

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**Blessed start to seasonal music**

THE man with the biggest beard after Father Christmas, Brian Blessed, will be bringing his extra large personality and voice to greet the festive season at Birmingham.

The popular actor will be giving readings at the Christmas Classics concert at the Symphony Hall on Saturday, December 20, at 2pm. Bach, Mozart, Pearsall and carols will feature in the concert involving guest soprano Elizabeth Atherton with the City of Birmingham Choir and London Concert Orchestra.

The Carols By Candlelight concert at the same venue that evening will include the Mozart Festival Orchestra in period costume and the Canzonetta choir. See [www.thsh.co.uk](http://www.thsh.co.uk) or call 0121 345 0603.

**Rockers return to play this weekend**

BIRMINGHAM rock legends Magnum promote album *Escape* from the Shadow Garden at Bilton's Robin 2 tomorrow (Friday). The same venue hosts ex-Marillion frontman Fish on Monday and a Compton Hospice charity concert featuring Dudley's former The Voice finalist Jenny Jones on Tuesday.

The Human League are at Wolverhampton Civic Hall tomorrow, when ex-Rainbow singer Graham Bonnett rocks Birmingham O2 Academy. Rockabilly queen Imelda May is at Digbeth's Institute on Saturday, while in another room Turbowolf lead Download Freezes Over.

# Hootenanny time comes early with Jools and his orchestra

## Niki has a Grand fairy role

FORMER X Factor star Niki Evans is gearing up to appear in pantomime at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre for the fourth time.

The singer, who reached the semi finals of the TV talent show in 2007, says she cannot wait to return to the city for the festive season. This year she will be appearing as the Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella*. This year she will be starring alongside Julian Clary and Joe Tracini, son of Joe Pasquale.

"It has become bit of a Christmas tradition for me," said Niki, who was born in Birmingham and now lives in Tamworth.

"I love getting glittered up and into costume, seeing how much it excites the kids is my favourite part."

Thousands of tickets have already been sold for the panto, which opens on Saturday and runs until January 18.



Singer Niki Evans is starring in pantomime *Cinderella* at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

## BOOGIE woogie big band maestro Jools Holland has a double date with Birmingham in the run up to Christmas with special guests Marc Almond and Rumer.

The piano man's latest tour comes hot on the heels of his new album *Sirens of Song* (released by East West), in which Jools and his Rhythm and Blues Orchestra team up with several leading female singers.

The 14-track recording includes two regular singers with his band, Oldham-born Louise Marshall and Birmingham's own Ruby Turner, plus on the bluesy *Lost Mind*, the velvet-voiced Rumer who will be joining Jools and co at the Symphony Hall on Wednesday and Thursday, December 17 and 18.

Other contributions to the album include one of the last recordings by jazz legend Eartha Kitt, *Ain't Misbehavin'* from a *Later* show in 2008, and the late Amy Winehouse in stomping reggae mode with *Monkey Man* from the *Hootenanny* show in 2006.

Highlights among newer recordings include Birmingham soul singer Laura Mvula's stylish take on *See Line Woman*, Emeli Sande on jazz standard *Love Me Or Leave Me*, Melanie C's version of Stevie Wonder's *I Wish* and a radical New Orleans style makeover for *Clash* song *Should I Stay Or Should I Go* by Kylie and Jools. Sometime mem-



Jools Holland leads his band

ber of his band, Joss Stone, also contributes *Letting Me Down*, which she co-wrote with Jools.

Some of these songs plus a lot of jazz, soul and reggae standards are likely to feature when Jools brings his feel-good show to the venue. Tickets cost £36 plus transaction fee. See [www.thsh.co.uk](http://www.thsh.co.uk) or call 0121 345 0600.

Meanwhile, former Soft Cell frontman Marc Almond will also be in concert in his own right at Birmingham Town Hall on April 17 as part of his *Velvet Trail* tour for his forthcoming album.

**Festive folk bring Christmas shows**

WOLVERHAMPTON'S Dan Whitehouse will be launching his new album, *Raw State*, at his Christmas show at the Glee Club, Birmingham on Sunday. Dan will be joined by Chris Tye, Harriet Harkcom and Duke Special. The show starts 8pm and tickets are £8 plus booking fee.

Barnsley nightingale Kate Rusby is bringing her annual festive show to the Symphony Hall, Birmingham on Thursday December 11. The show starts 7.30pm and tickets are £25 plus transactions fees.

The festivities continue when Maddy Prior brings her carols and capers show to Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday, December 14. The show starts at 7.30pm and tickets are £19.50 plus fees. See [www.thsh.co.uk](http://www.thsh.co.uk)

**Cool Yule with Rat Pack Vegas show**

START the festivities with a ring-a-ding-ding time at the Christmas with the Rat Pack Live from Las Vegas Show this week.

The tribute to Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr starts a three-night (and Saturday matinee) run at the New Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham tonight (Thursday) with the Burrelli Sisters and Rat Pack Big Band. It puts a festive twist on the cool crooner sounds of the 1950s and 60s, so expect *Baby It's Cold Outside* and *White Christmas*.

The theatre is also launching its new Ambassador Lounge for those seeking a VIP experience.

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## CHOICE



Miranda Hart

**The Jonathan Ross Show (ITV, 10.35pm)**

In case you've been oblivious to the adverts, posters and pop-up ads, Peter Jackson's final part of his Hobbit trilogy is about to hit cinemas. While the source material may not have demanded such an epic saga, The Hobbit has given Martin Freeman one of the best roles of his career as Bilbo Baggins. This week he drops into the studio to discuss The Battle of the Five Armies, while the most controversial man on four wheels, Jeremy Clarkson, will no doubt be discussing the recent farrago in Argentina. Plus, funnywoman Miranda Hart and X Factor veteran Ella Henderson also lend their considerable talents to the proceedings.

## BBC1

**6.00 Breakfast.** **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Tom Kerridge's Proper Pub Food. **(R) 12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **1.00** Live Snooker: UK Championship. Coverage of the first semi-final at the Barbican Centre in York. **4.30** Final Score. **5.25** Celebrity Mastermind. **(R) 5.55** BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

**6.10 Pointless Celebrities.** Alexander Armstrong quizzes eight writers – Charlie Higson, Rachel Johnson, Robert Harris, Gill Hornby, Jenny Colgan, Benjamin Zephaniah, Danny Wallace and Stuart Maconie.

**7.00 Strictly Come Dancing.** Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present the quarter-final of the ballroom battle as the remaining six pro-celebrity couples take another few dance steps closer to lifting the glitterball trophy. Len Goodman, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcey Bussell provide their opinions and scores, which are combined with the votes of the viewers to decide which two couples will appear in tomorrow night's dreaded dance-off.

**8.15 Atlantis.** Ariadne sets out on a journey for Telamon's homeland of Aegina, despite Jason's concerns for his queen's safety – and before long the royal procession faces enemies at every turn.

**9.00 Casualty.** Ash disagrees with Dylan on how to treat a suspected overdose, Zoe gets annoyed with Cal for flirting with her patient and the paramedics receive a mysterious hamper for Jeff.

**9.50 The National Lottery Live.** Jenni Falconer is joined by singer Katherine Jenkins as she reveals the numbers for the Lotto and Thunderball draws.

**10.00 BBC News; Weather.**  
**10.20 Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League clashes, including Newcastle United v Chelsea at St James' Park and Stoke City v Arsenal at the Britannia Stadium; National Lottery Update.

**11.45 The Football League Show.** Manish Bhasin presents highlights and all the goals from the latest fixtures.

**12.25 Film: A/VOL: Absent Without Leave.** (1990) **2.05** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.10** BBC News.

## BBC2

**6.00 CBBC.** **11.00** The Blue Planet. (R) **12.00** Rick Stein's Far Eastern Odyssey. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.05** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.15** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.40** Text Santa: Little Helpers. (R) **7.45** Matt Hatter Chronicles. **8.10** Text Santa: Little Helpers. (R) **8.15** Horrid Henry. **8.30** The Munch Box. **9.25** Dinner Date. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.15** ITV News; Weather. **11.25** Storage Hoarders. (R) **12.25** Countrywise. (R) **12.55** Doc Martin. (R) **2.00** Keep It in the Family. (R) **3.00** Film: Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. (2002)

**6.00 Secrets of the Castle with Ruth, Peter and Tom.** This edition focuses on the surprisingly colourful world of medieval interior design, with Peter Ginn and Tom Pinfold rendering and lime-washing the inside walls of a guard tower, transforming its dark stone walls into a bright space. Ruth Goodman makes paint and decorates the castle bedchamber using designs based on those recently discovered at an 11th-century church nearby, and Peter gets to grips with the indoor toilets known as garderobes. (R)

**7.00 Live Snooker: UK Championship.** Hazel Irvine presents all the action from the second semi-final at the Barbican Centre in York, where the first player to win six frames will book their place in tomorrow's final. This is the second most prestigious ranking tournament on the calendar and one that has produced a remarkable series of champions in recent years, with the last eight events being won by a different player. Subsequent programmes subject to change.

**10.00 Tomorrow's Worlds: The Unearthly History of Science Fiction.** Dominic Sandbrook examines sci-fi's obsession with creating artificial life, looking at examples from Doctor Who, The Terminator, Blade Runner, Battlestar Galactica and The Matrix.

**11.00 Intruders.** Jack discovers the alarming scope of the organisation to which he has lost Amy, Marcus and Madison engage in a fatal struggle, and Richard goes on the run. Last in the series.

**11.45 Film: Night and the City.** (1992) A small-time lawyer becomes a boxing promoter, only to fall foul of gangsters who stand to lose money on his fighters. Thriller remake, starring Robert De Niro and Jessica Lange.

**1.25 Film: Beyond the Fire.** (2009) **2.40** This Is BBC Two.

## ITV

**6.00** CITV: The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Pat & Stan. (2002) Christmas comedy, starring Nick Stabile. **12.15** Film: Meet the Santas. (2005) Fantasy comedy sequel, with Steve Guttenberg. **1.55** Film: Hats Off to Christmas! (2013) Romantic drama, with Haylie Duff and Antonio Cupo. **3.40** Film: Mrs Miracle. (2009) A talented housekeeper helps a widowed father of twin boys to turn his life around and rediscover his love of music. Family drama, starring Doris Roberts and James Van Der Beek. **5.35** Film: Noel. (2004) Drama, starring Susan Sarandon. **7.25** Britain's Craziest Christmas Lights. Former Slade frontman Noddy Holder narrates a documentary following four households as they turn their homes into electric winter wonderlands with extensive displays of festive illuminations. For these Christmas obsessives, who include Dave and Carol Edwards, putting up the lights involves a head for heights, DIY wiring skills and an unshakable resolve, with some inspired by the bling of Blackpool while others aim for the ambitious scale of a West End show. (R)

**8.25 5 News Weekend.** **9.00** Film: Rocky Balboa. (2006) The ageing fighter contemplates a return to the ring when a computer simulation reveals he would have defeated the current world heavyweight champion Mason "The Line" Dixon, who responds by challenging Rocky to face him for real. Boxing drama sequel, directed by and starring Sylvester Stallone.

**10.30 Film: Pale Rider.** (1985) A mysterious preacher with lethal gunfighting skills helps a mining community battle a ruthless landowner. Western, directed by and starring Clint Eastwood.

**12.40 SuperCasino.** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** Gotham. Gordon and Bullock investigate a deadly fight club where the winners are awarded a job, while Bruce learns a difficult lesson when he tries to make friends at school. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. Ann Maurice offers advice to a bachelor having trouble selling his home in Knutsford, Cheshire, because it is too masculine. (R) **4.25** Midsomer Murders. (1999) **3.05** Holyoaks. (R) **5.15** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R)

**6.00** Regional Programme; Weather. **6.15** ITV News; Weather. **6.30** New You've Been Framed! Comedy with Harry Hill, inspired by viewers' videos, featuring elaborate pranks, a cat terrorising a postman and an accident at the top of the Eiffel Tower.

**7.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special.** I'm a Celebrity 2013 winner Kian Egan, former Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies, presenter Matt Johnson and actor Larry Lamb play for charity. Bradley Walsh hosts. Last in the series.

**8.00 The X Factor.** The acts have been in rehearsals all week and now the time has come for them to show the voting public why they deserve a place in next week's final. Dermot O'Leary hosts. The results are tomorrow at 8pm.

**9.30 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!** Ant and Dec present highlights from the past 24 hours in the jungle and reveal which celebrity has fallen at the last hurdle, missing out on a place in the final.

**10.35 The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host is joined by Top Gear presenter Jeremy Clarkson, comedy actress Miranda Hart and The Hobbit star Martin Freeman, and former X Factor contestant Ella Henderson performs.

**11.40** ITV News; Weather. **11.55** Film: Play Misty for Me. (1971) A DJ revives his relationship with an old flame, driving an obsessive fan mad with jealousy. Psychological thriller, directed by and starring Clint Eastwood, with Jessica Walter.

**1.40** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.45** ITV NightScreen.

## CHANNEL 4

**6.05** Great Ethiopian Run. **7.00** Film: Superbike World Championship. **8.00** The Morning Line. **9.00** Weekend Kitchen. **10.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **10.55** Frasier. (R) **11.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.55** The Simpsons. (R) **12.20** Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. (R) **1.20** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Sandown Park and Aintree. **4.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.35** Come Dine with Me. (R)

**6.00 Come Dine with Me.** Fun-loving salesman Charlie Spiteri hosts the final festive dinner party in south-east London. A stylish offering of oysters and champagne on arrival impresses his guests, but the cook encounters problems with an ambitious three-bird roast. However, he hopes his snow machine and festive capers will be enough for him to take the £1,000 prize. (R)

**6.30 Channel 4 News.** **7.00** Inside Rolls-Royce. A behind-the-scenes look at the exclusive and luxurious world of the renowned British car brand, following workers at the manufacturer's Goodwood factory as they build their most expensive bespoke car to date, the Celestial Phantom, which comes complete with diamond-studded interior. The programme reveals the craftsmanship that goes into making and selling vehicles with a huge price tag and the lengths to which the team will go in the pursuit of perfection. (R)

**8.00 Film: Battleship.** (2012) Premiere. A reckless slacker joins the Navy, hoping to win the respect of his girlfriend's father, a stern admiral. He and his shipmates are put to the ultimate test as part of a force of vessels that must battle an invading fleet of powerful alien spaceships. Sci-fi adventure, starring Taylor Kitsch, Liam Neeson and Alexander Skarsgard.

**10.35 Film: From Dusk Till Dawn.** (1996) A pair of outlaws take a family hostage and then lie low in a Mexican strip club, which turns out to be infested with vampires. Horror, starring George Clooney and Harvey Keitel.

**12.40** Film: The Talented Mr Ripley. (1999) **3.05** Holyoaks. (R) **5.15** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R)

## CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake! **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** Film: Santa Jr. (2002) Christmas comedy, starring Nick Stabile. **12.15** Film: Meet the Santas. (2005) Fantasy comedy sequel, with Steve Guttenberg. **1.55** Film: Hats Off to Christmas! (2013) Romantic drama, with Haylie Duff and Antonio Cupo. **3.40** Film: Mrs Miracle. (2009) A talented housekeeper helps a widowed father of twin boys to turn his life around and rediscover his love of music. Family drama, starring Doris Roberts and James Van Der Beek. **5.35** Film: Noel. (2004) Drama, starring Susan Sarandon. **7.25** Britain's Craziest Christmas Lights. Former Slade frontman Noddy Holder narrates a documentary following four households as they turn their homes into electric winter wonderlands with extensive displays of festive illuminations. For these Christmas obsessives, who include Dave and Carol Edwards, putting up the lights involves a head for heights, DIY wiring skills and an unshakable resolve, with some inspired by the bling of Blackpool while others aim for the ambitious scale of a West End show. (R)

**8.25 5 News Weekend.** **9.00** Film: Rocky Balboa. (2006) The ageing fighter contemplates a return to the ring when a computer simulation reveals he would have defeated the current world heavyweight champion Mason "The Line" Dixon, who responds by challenging Rocky to face him for real. Boxing drama sequel, directed by and starring Sylvester Stallone.

**10.30 Film: Pale Rider.** (1985) A mysterious preacher with lethal gunfighting skills helps a mining community battle a ruthless landowner. Western, directed by and starring Clint Eastwood.

**12.40 SuperCasino.** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** Gotham. Gordon and Bullock investigate a deadly fight club where the winners are awarded a job, while Bruce learns a difficult lesson when he tries to make friends at school. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. Ann Maurice offers advice to a bachelor having trouble selling his home in Knutsford, Cheshire, because it is too masculine. (R) **4.25** Midsomer Murders. (1999) **3.05** Holyoaks. (R) **5.15** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R)

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## DIGITAL

**BBC Three** **7.00** Doctor Who **8.00** Top Gear **9.00** Sherlock **10.30** Bad Education **11.00** Family Guy **1.30** Life is Toft **2.00** Sweat the Small Stuff **2.30** Some Girls **3.00** Bad Education **3.30** Parents' Evening **4.00** Close

**BBC Four** **7.00** Ice Age Giants **8.00** Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau **9.00** Inspector Montalbano **10.45** Billy Joel: The Bridge to Russia – A Matter of Trust **12.00** Billy Joel: Live in Leningrad **1.20** Top of the Pops: 1979 **2.00** Ice Age Giants **3.00** Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau **4.00** Close

**ITV2** **12.00** The Cube: Celebrity Special **1.00** Totally Wove've Been Framed! **2.05** Film: Rumor Has It (2005) **4.00** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **5.30** Film: She's the Man (2006) **7.40** Film: The Scorpion King (2002) **9.30** The X Factor **10.35** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now! **11.35** The X Factor **1.05** The X Factor **2.00** Two and a Half Men **2.45** Kiez: The Hot Desk **2.55** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 NightScreen

**ITV3** **12.50** Film: Columbo: Negative Reaction (1974) **2.50** Agatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Rosemary & Thyme **8.00** Doc Martin **9.00** Foyle's War **11.00** A Touch of Frost **1.05** Bomb Girls **1.55** ITV3 NightScreen **2.30** Teleshopping

**ITV4** **11.15** Alias Smith and Jones **12.25** The Professionals **1.30** Live Tennis. The St. Louis Masters Tennis. **4.30** Cheers **5.00** Alias Smith and Jones **5.00** Storage Wars **7.30** Live Tennis. The St. Louis Masters Tennis. **10.30** Film: The Living Daylights (1987) **1.15** Journey to Le Mans **2.15** Tommy Cooper **2.45** ITV4 NightScreen **2.30** Teleshopping

**ITV5** **11.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.00** How I Met Your Mother **1.00** Melissa & Joey **3.00** Made in Chelsea **4.00** Rude (ish) Tube **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: The Waterboy (1998) **10.50** Rude Tube **11.55** The Inbetweeners **1.00** How I Met Your Mother **2.00** The Cleveland Show **3.15** Franklin & Bash **3.55** Happy Endings **4.20** My Fair Wedding

**Film4** **11.00** The Belles of St Trinian's (1954) **1.00** The Hunt for Red October (1990) **3.45** The King and I (1956) **6.25** The Way We Live Now (2010) **9.00** The Talented Mr Ripley (1999) **11.05** Heat (1995) **2.20** Shutter (2008) **4.00** Close

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CHOICE



**Ant and Dec**  
**I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! (ITV, 9pm)**  
Back in 2002, the powers that be at ITV first discussed the seemingly absurd idea of taking a handful of headline-grabbing celebrities, cutting off their home comforts and throwing them in to the middle of a beastie-inhabited Australian jungle. 'It'll never work' cried a groaning public. But 12 years, and 14 series, down the line, and we're just about ready to crown our new jungle winner. This time last year, we were having trouble making the call between singer Kian Egan and fashion designer David Emmanuel after an eventful few weeks watching the holed-up celebs. This time around, we've seen tears and tantrums, expletives-filled bush trucker trials and too many naff jokes to count from Ant and Dec (we love them really).

BBC1

**6.00 Breakfast. 7.35 Match of the Day.** (R) **9.00 The Andrew Marr Show.** 10.00 Fern Britton Meets Nicholas Parsons.  
**11.00 Sunday Politics. 12.15 MOTD2 Extra.** With Mark Chapman and the Match of the Day team. **1.00 BBC News.** Weather. **1.15 Bargain Hunt.** (R) **1.45 FA Cup Final Score. 4.20 Songs of Praise. 4.55 Christmas Supermarket Secrets.** (R) **5.55 BBC News; Regional News.**  
**6.20 Countryfile.** The team reports from East Sussex, where Helen Skelton discovers the secrets of the mysterious shepherd's stones and goes on a fossil hunt with local schoolchildren, finding the footprints of what's believed to be a dinosaur. John Craven takes a stroll round the grounds of Batemans, a country house where writer Rudyard Kipling sought solace and peace, and new presenter Joe Crowley joins a team from the Sussex Wildlife Ambulance service as they are called out to a stag in distress.  
**7.20 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results.** Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman reveal which couples are guaranteed a place in the semi-final and which two have to face each other in the dance-off. OneRepublic provide the music.  
**8.00 Antiques Roadshow.** The team visits Waltham Forest Town Hall in east London, where items include a Rolex with a connection to Britain's Special Forces and the world's oldest hot cross bun.  
**9.00 Remember Me.** Di Fairholme joins Hannah to search for Tom, finding him at a caravan park – but he still refuses to be drawn on the significance of the song Scarborough Fair.  
**10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.**  
**10.30 Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action.  
**11.35 The Apprentice.** The entrepreneurs are challenged to find and buy nine items – all of which have featured in tasks throughout the history of the show – at the best possible prices. (R)  
**12.35 Film:** Racing for Time. (2008) **2.00 Weather for the Week Ahead. 2.05 BBC News.**

BBC2

**6.15 Great British Garden Revival.** (R) **7.15 Countryfile.** (R) **8.15 Glorious Gardens from Above.** (R) **9.00 The Football League Show.** (R) **9.40 50 Golden Years of Sport on BBC Two.** (R) **10.40 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.**  
**12.10 The A to Z of TV Cooking.** (R) **12.55 Live Snooker: UK Championship.** The opening session of the final at the Barbican Centre in York.  
**6.00 MOTD: FA Cup Highlights.** Manish Bhasin presents action from the latest second-round matches, as the non-league sides aimed to make a name for themselves and book a place in the third round, and a potential tie against a Premier League club. Fixtures included Gateshead v Warrington Town, Bradford City v Dartford and Scunthorpe United v Worcester City.  
**7.00 Live Snooker: UK Championship.** Hazel Irvine introduces coverage of the second session of the final at the Barbican Centre in York, where the first player to reach 10 frames will be crowned champion. Mark Selby led Neil Robertson heading into the concluding session of last year's final, but the Jester from Leicester had no answer to his Australian opponent, who recorded another two century breaks on his way to winning the tournament for the first time. The commentary team features Dennis Taylor, Ken Doherty, Steve Davis, John Virgo, John Parrott and Stephen Hendry.  
**11.00 Russell Howard's Good News.** The comedian offers his perspective on stories dominating the media, whether on television, online or in print, and he is joined by a guest with an amazing tale to tell. (R)  
**11.30 Film: The British Guide to Showing Off.** (2011) Premiere. Part-animated documentary about Andrew Logan's Alternative Miss World show, celebrating some of the most memorable contestants featured over the 40 years of the event.  
**1.05 Sign Zone:** Countryfile. John Craven uncovers one of Lancashire's hidden jewels. (R) **2.00 Holly City.** Jesse faces up to the consequences of his womanising ways, Zosia grapples with a patient harbouring a secret and the Holly board tries to impose force cost-cutting measures. (R) **3.00 This Is BBC Two.** Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00 CITV:** The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.25 Pat & Stan.** (R) **6.35 Pat & Stan.** (R) **6.40 Dino Dan: Treks Adventures.** (R) **6.50 Dino Dan: Treks Adventures.** (R) **7.05 Canimals.** (R) **7.10 Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.15 Sooty.** (R) **7.25 Mr Bean: The Animated Series.** (R) **7.40 Text Santa: Little Helpers.** (R) **7.45 Ultimate Spider-Man.** **8.10 Text Santa: Little Helpers.** (R) **8.15 Horror Henry.** **8.30 Big Time Rush.** **9.00 The Aquabats! Super Show!** (R) **9.25 Dickinson's Real Deal.** (R) **10.25 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **11.25 ITV News; Weather. 11.35 Film: Batteries Not Included.** (1987) **1.30 All Star Family Fortunes.** (R) **2.30 The X Factor.** (R) **4.00 Film:** Apollo 13. (1995) Fact-based drama, starring Tom Hanks.  
**6.35 Regional Programme; Weather. 6.45 ITV News; Weather. 7.00 Coronation Street.** Hour-long episode. A desperate Kelly sets off to find Callum after running out of drugs, while Eva agrees to take a worried David to his wife's old haunt the Dog & Gun. Kal is furious that Tony is exploiting Zeeidan when he should be with his family. Luke comes to the rescue after Maria accidentally stabs herself in the eye with a mascara wand, and Tim worries he's going to have to pull out of the school auction as his reading just isn't up to it. Katy confides in Alya that she reckons Gary and Izzy are getting back together, and Owen unwittingly lets slip to Diane that Kevin gave her sofa to Sally.  
**8.00 The X Factor Results.** The remaining contestants wait with bated breath as Dermot O'Leary reveals who is safe and which acts will be battling it out in the sing-off for a place in next week's final.  
**9.00 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!** It's the final to what has been an eventful three weeks in the Australian jungle, full of terrifying trials, sleepless nights and stomach-churning meals, and the celebrities who have gone one the way will now be looking forward to catching a plane home. Last in the series.  
**10.30 ITV News; Weather. 10.45 Film: I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry.** (2007) Comedy, with Adam Sandler.  
**12.50 The Store. 2.35 Motorsport UK.** (R) **3.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA.** (R) **4.10 ITV NightScreen. 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.10 NFL: The American Football Show.** (R) **7.05 How I Met Your Mother.** (R) **7.30 How I Met Your Mother.** (R) **7.55 Frasier.** (R) **8.30 Small Animal Hospital.** **9.00 Jamie's Comfort Food.** (R) **9.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **1.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **1.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **1.55 The Simpsons.** (R) **2.25 The Simpsons.** (R) **2.50 Film: Stardust.** (2007) Fantasy adventure, starring Charlie Cox and Claire Danes. **5.25 Film: Home Alone 2: Lost in New York.** (1992) Comedy sequel, starring Macaulay Culkin.  
**7.45 Channel 4 News. 8.00 The Billion Pound Base: Dismantling Camp Bastion.** For eight years, Britain's biggest overseas base since the Second World War has been the powerhouse of UK and US military operations in Afghanistan, and now Camp Bastion has closed down for good. A town the size of Reading with a massive infrastructure, including an airport, hospital and fast-food restaurants, has been dismantled bolt by bolt – a huge project that faced a constant threat from the Taliban as defences and manpower depleted daily. This documentary follows the men and women assigned to the task.  
**9.00 Homeland.** Carrie is forced to improve to salvage her mission, while the CIA swiftly closes in on a leak. Claire Danes, Rupert Friend and Mandy Patinkin star in the American thriller.  
**10.00 Film: Sinister.** (2012) Premiere. A writer researching a horrific incident that took place in his house years previously uncovers a supernatural threat. Horror, starring Ethan Hawke.  
**12.05 Alan Carr: Chatty Man.** The host is joined by entertainer Bruce Forsyth, comedian Lee Evans and singer-songwriter George Ezra, who performs his latest single Listen to the Man. (R) **1.00 American Football Live.** San Diego Chargers v New England Patriots (Kick-off 1.30am). Coverage of the week 14 clash from Qualcomm Stadium, where the AFC West and AFC East teams face each other. **4.45 NFL: Rush Zone.** Animation about a young American football fan who must protect shards of a power source called The Core, which is hidden in various NFL stadiums. **5.10 Win It Cook It.** (R) **5.35 Countdown.** Alistair McGowan joins Nick Hewitt and Rachel Riley for the words-and-numbers game. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. 6.05 Roary the Racing Car.** (R) **6.15 Angelina Ballerina: The Next Steps.** (R) **6.30 Pip Ahoy!** (R) **6.40 The Mr Men Show.** (R) **6.55 Chloe's Closet.** (R) **7.05 Bananas in Pyjamas.** (R) **7.20 Make Way for Noddy.** (R) **7.30 Paw Patrol. 7.45 Little Princess.** (R) **7.55 The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky.** (R) **8.10 Wanda and the Alien.** **8.20 Zack and Quack. 8.35 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom.** (R) **8.55 Jelly Jam.** (R) **9.10 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** (R) **9.45 Access.** (R) **9.50 Police Interceptors.** (R) **10.45 Police Interceptors.** (R) **11.40 Police Interceptors.** (R) **12.40 Film: Dear Santa.** (2011) Romantic comedy, starring Amy Acker and David Haydn-Jones. **2.30 Film: Santa Who?** (2009) Family comedy, starring Leslie Nielsen.  
**4.20 Film: Ice Age: The Meltdown.** (2006) Animated adventure sequel, with the voice of Ray Romano.  
**6.00 5 News Weekend. 6.05 Film: Where Eagles Dare.** (1969) An American general is held captive by the Nazis in a heavily defended fortress in the Alps. A crack team of British soldiers and an American lieutenant are dispatched to free him, but they soon realise there is a traitor in their ranks. Second World War adventure, starring Richard Burton, Clint Eastwood, Patrick Wymark, Michael Hordern and Mary Ure.  
**9.00 Film: Enemies Closer.** (2013) Premiere. A forest ranger working on the border between the US and Canada has an encounter with an old enemy who has sworn revenge on him. However, the former foes are forced to work together to survive an encounter with a drug cartel's agents, who are searching for a missing shipment. Action adventure, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, Tom Everett Scott and Orlando Jones.  
**10.45 Film: The Shepherd.** (2008) A border patrol agent sets out to stop military veterans trying to smuggle heroin out of Mexico into the US. Action thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme and Scott Adkins.  
**12.35 Campus PD.** (R) **1.05 SuperCasino.** Live interactive gaming.  
**3.10 The Gadget Show.** Union J check out devices that could enhance festive celebrations. (R) **4.00 Heroes Doctor.** (R) **4.25 Make It Big.** (R) **5.15 Angels of Jarm.** (R) **5.40 Roary the Racing Car.** (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Three**  
**7.00 Top Gear. 8.00 Doctor Who: The Ultimate Guide. 10.00 Family Guy. 10.45 American Dad! 11.30 Some Girls. 12.00 Sweat – The Small Stuff. 12.30 Life Is Toff. 1.00 Edinburgh Comedy Fest Live 2012. 2.00 Extreme Beauty Queens: Secrets of South America. 3.00 Some Girls. BBC Four**  
**7.00 The Great War. 7.40 Britain's Wild Places. 8.00 The Day of the Triffids. 9.00 Imagine – Rod Stewart: Can't Stop Me Now. 10.25 Foo Fighters: Sonic Highways. 12.25 The Story of Funk: One Nation Under a Groove. 1.25 The Genius of Funk. 2.25 Imagine – Rod Stewart: Can't Stop Me Now. 3.50 Close**  
**ITV2**  
**11.30 The X Factor. 1.00 The Xtra Factor. 2.05 Blue: The Hot Desk. 2.15 You've Been Framed at Christmas. 3.15 Ant & Dec's Christmas Show. 4.30 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! 5.40 Film: The Mummys (1999). 8.00 Scorpion. 9.00 The Xtra Factor. 10.00 You've Been Framed! 10.30 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now! 11.35 Film: American Pie Presents Band Camp (2005). 1.20 Two and a Half Men. 2.10 The Vampire Diaries. 2.55 Teleshopping. 5.55 ITV2 NightScreen**  
**ITV3**  
**11.30 A Touch of Frost. 1.35 Rosemary & Thyme. 2.35 Agatha Christie's Marple. 4.40 Film: Columbo: Troubled Waters (1975). 6.45 Inspector Morse. 9.00 Lewis. 11.00 Cracker. 1.10 William and Mary. 2.05 Judge Judy. 3.10 ITV3 NightScreen. 3.40 Emmerdale**  
**ITV4**  
**11.45 Live Tennis: The St. Pauli Masters Tennis. 2.30 Cheers. 3.00 Alias Smith and Jones. 4.05 Film: Paths of Glory (1957). 6.00 Live Tennis: The Mylan World Tennis Smash Hits. 9.00 Film: The Specialist (1994). 11.15 Film: Rambo III (1988). 1.20 River Monsters. 2.30 Nitro Circus. 2.50 ITV4 NightScreen. 3.00 Teleshopping**  
**E4**  
**12.30 Made in Chelsea. 1.35 Melissa & Joey. 2.00 Film: First Daughter (2004). 4.15 Rude(ish) Tube Shorts. 4.30 The Big Bang Theory. 8.00 Film: Step Up 2: The Streets (2008). 10.00 The Inbetweeners. 11.10 Bad Robots. 11.40 How I Met Your Mother. 12.40 Rules of Engagement. 1.40 Paternity Court. 2.35 My Fair Wedding**  
**Film4**  
**11.00 Merrill's Marauders (1962). 1.00 Rat Race (2001). 3.10 Passport to Pimlico (1949). 4.55 The Nativity Story (2006). 6.55 Big (1989). 9.00 This Means War (2012). 10.55 Under Siege 2: Dark Territory (1995). 1.00 No (2012). 3.25 Close**

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**MONDAY**

**Mistletoe Over Manhattan, Channel 5, 3.30pm**  
Santa Claus's wife goes to New York to perform a Christmas miracle and give her husband fresh inspiration. She befriends a cop who is in the middle of a divorce and offers to become a nanny to his children. She then discovers he still loves his wife, and tries to find a way to bring them back together. Seasonal fantasy, starring Tricia Helfer and Greg Bryk. (2011)

**TUESDAY**

**The Lookout, BBC1, 11.50pm**  
A teenager's promising future is cut short when a car crash leaves him with brain damage that affects his memory. Taking a job as a janitor at a bank, he falls under the influence of crooks led by a former school friend. However, as he becomes aware of their plan to pull off a robbery, he makes a desperate attempt to stop them. Drama, with Joseph Gordon-Levitt. (2007)

**WEDNESDAY**

**Rabbit Hole, BBC1, 11.35pm**  
A couple's happy lives are thrown into upheaval by the death of their son in a road accident. As they try to keep their marriage from falling apart, the wife forms a friendship with the driver responsible for the tragedy while the husband immerses himself in the past and turns to another bereaved parent for support. Drama, with Nicole Kidman and Aaron Eckhart. (2010)



**Dead Poets Society, Friday, BBC2, 11.35pm**

**THURSDAY**

**It's Christmas, Carol!, Channel 5, 3.30pm**  
A heartless publishing executive is hated by her staff, who are secretly plotting against her. At Christmas, she receives a visit from the ghost of her former boss, who takes her on a journey through her past, present and future to show her where her life went wrong and how she can put things right. Fantasy, starring Emmanuelle Vaugier and Carrie Fisher. (2012)

**FRIDAY**

**Dead Poets Society, BBC2, 11.35pm**  
A charismatic English teacher at a New England prep school in the 1950s raises eyebrows among his strait-laced colleagues by encouraging the students to live life beyond their expectations. Unfortunately, the boys find their families and the rest of the teaching staff are not so understanding about their desire to follow their dreams. Drama, starring Robin Williams. (1989)

**PICK OF THE WEEK**

# Stars prove Variety is the spice of life

If you were around on November 12, 53 years ago, you may recall the line-up of the Royal Variety Performance. Bruce Forsyth took to the stage at the Prince of Wales Theatre, and introduced the likes of Lionel Blair, Morecambe and Wise, and a fresh-faced young woman from Tiger Bay who became a music legend.

Shirley Bassey made her debut at the prestigious show, only the second to be televised at that point. Of course it wouldn't be the last time she would wow the masses at the RVP. Four years later she was at the London Palladium for another of seven Royal Variety Performance appearances.

In 1971, she and Bruce returned; then Shirley was back again in 1976, the same year comedian-in-waiting Michael McIntyre was born.

After an 11-year break, the diamante diva returned in 1987, by which time Elly Goulding and every member of McBusted had made their own debut in the world.

By 1994, Jack Whitehall, Demi Lovato and Ed Sheeran had tottered onto the stage of life, and Ms Bassey's services were requested again, as they were in 2000 (at the Dominion Theatre).

In 2005, she was on home turf at Cardiff's Millennium Centre, and now Shirley is back at the Palladium for one of the biggest events in the showbiz calendar. "My very first performance on The Royal Variety Performance was in 1961, and with each show it just gets better and better," she explains. "I'm excited and honoured to be a part of this year's show and to share the stage with such great talent."

The aforementioned Mr McIntyre is our host, and the line-up is the starriest since Bob Geldof got out his address book ahead of re-recording the Band Aid single.

Aside from Sheeran; Goulding; Lovato; Bette Midler; Simply Red; Alfie Boe; Ladysmith Black Mambazo's Inala and Collabro, there's comedy from Whitehall; Trevor Noah; Russell Kane; Sarah Millican and Rod Woodward.

Plus, the casts of Miss Saigon and hit cabaret La Soiree are also taking to the stage to entertain the crowd.

McIntyre is thrilled to be fronting the show again: "When The Queen FaceTimed me and asked me to host the Royal Variety Performance again I was utterly thrilled, especially when she told me it was to be in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, whose presence I have never been in before. I plan on wearing the dress Catherine wore at the St Andrew's University fashion show to guarantee I hold Prince William's attention throughout."

Bette Midler is also thrilled to be taking part: "As a little girl growing up with dreams of being a singer, I never imagined I would one day perform for members of the Royal Family," she enthuses. "It's quite an honour to take the stage before such a distinguished audience, and it's a privilege to be included in a long list of talented artists who have been a part of The Royal Variety Performance for over a century."



**Shirley Bassey features, The Royal Variety Performance 2014, Monday, ITV, 7.30pm**

**BEST OF THE REST****MONDAY**

**Jamie's Cracking Christmas Channel 4, 8pm**

Jamie Oliver whips up a selection of festive, easily prepared dishes in his own kitchen, showing viewers how to impress friends and family with a menu full of delicious treats. Recipes for some of the chef's personal favourites, including beef Wellington, roast goose with all the trimmings, cocktails, steamed goose buns, and chocolate and marmalade panettone bread-and-butter tart, are certain to help keen cooks raise their Christmas spread to the next level.

**TUESDAY**

**Kirstie's Handmade Christmas Channel 4, 8pm**

Is there anything Kirstie Allsopp can't do? After all, this is the woman who will not only find you a house with plenty of period features, she could also give you a few pointers on how to make a stocking to hang over that vintage fireplace. In this seasonal special, she's even got her own little grotto (no doubt guaranteed to increase in value) in the very desirable location of Blenheim Palace's magical Christmas fair, where she's joined by top crafters from across the UK to show us how to add the personal touch to this year's celebrations. Kirstie will be immersing herself in some of the

workshops available at the fair, but she'll also be looking a little further afield for her inspiration as she heads to Norway to learn more about the customs that make up a Scandinavian Christmas, and incorporate them into her own crafty ideas.

**WEDNESDAY**

**The Lost Honour of Christopher Jefferies ITV, 9pm**

Some actors burst onto the showbiz scene with all guns blazing and become overnight stars, burning brightly in the consciousness for decades. Then there are the character actors who beaver away, delivering terrific turns year after year, eventually making the masses realise that they are national treasures. Jason Watkins has fallen into the latter camp for some time now. Now the much-in-demand thespian takes on one of the most demanding roles of his career, as Christopher Jefferies, the man caught up in the 2010 disappearance of Joanna Yeates in Bristol. A retired teacher, Jefferies' life was turned on its head when his tenant Joanna disappeared without a trace just before Christmas, but as the investigation gathered pace, he found himself at the forefront of it –

as the police's prime suspect. Ben Caplan, Shaun Parkes and Peter Polycarpou star alongside Watkins in what's bound to be hard-hitting viewing.

**THURSDAY BBC Music Awards BBC1, 8pm**

Chris Evans and Fearne Cotton host the inaugural BBC Music Awards, broadcast live across BBC One, Radio 1 and Radio 2 from London's Earls Court. An array of British and international singers and bands come together to celebrate the past year in music, and there could be a few surprising

collaborations. Performers confirmed so far include Ed Sheeran, Paloma Faith, Take That, Coldplay, George Ezra, Labrinth, Ella Henderson, Calvin Harris and pop-classical fusion quartet Clean Bandit – and not forgetting a certain boy band going by the name of One Direction. During the evening, three

awards will be presented – British Artist of the Year, International Artist of the Year and Song of the Year – and while the first two are chosen by a panel of music journalists, the last one is voted for by members of the public. Also being broadcast on Radio 1 and Radio 2.

**FRIDAY**

**A Night in with Olly Murs ITV, 9pm**

Five years ago, we had no idea who Olly Murs was. He'd just returned to the UK after backpacking in Australia, and was about to audition for The X Factor for the third time – his first two attempts came to nothing. But it was a case of third time lucky, because Olly was suddenly in the limelight, and was the eventual runner-up to Joe McElderry. Since then, his laidback charm has won him an army of fans, and he recently released a new album entitled Never Been Better. Olly's success has also led to him being a one-off musical extravaganza, which features performances of his best-known hits, including Dear Darlin', Heart Skips a Beat and his latest single, Wrapped Up, as well as a few surprises moments involving his celebrity friends. "I am so excited about doing my first TV special," says Olly. "The show will be great fun, packed with off the wall comic segments, surprises and, of course, music."



**Kirstie's Handmade Christmas, Tuesday, Channel 4, 8pm**

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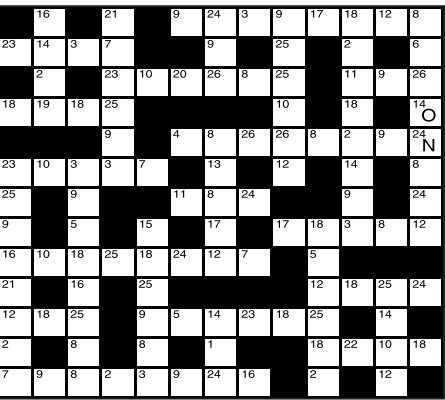
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Email: info@baltibazaar.net



Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
O	Q	C	Y	G	T	K	X	I	F	Z	U	P
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
S	A	V	H	B	M	R	D	N	L	W	J	E

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

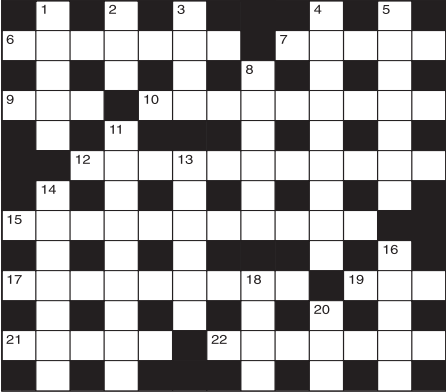
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 6. Most important community should provide some interest (7)
- 7. See 3 Down.
- 9. What the leaders of amateur college theatres do (3)
- 10. Side-blow (5-4)
- 12. Foremen accuse the deck-labourers (6-5)
- 15. Does it give an image of the French horse? (6-5)
- 17. This may vary according to the wave formation (4,5)
- 19 & 20Dn. Impose a ban in favour of bridge call? (6)
- 21. See 22 Across.
- 22 & 21Ac. Search in boat for leguminous food (7,5)

Down

- 1 & 14Dn. Deceptive expressions become slogans (5-7)
- 2 & 18Dn. Primitive material for covering the bare facts! (3-4)
- 3 & 7Ac. Passable investment is the result of equitable distribution (4,5)
- 4. Give reasons for theatrical legal proceedings? (4,5)
- 5. A dangerous missile when it gets out of hand (7)
- 8. A dandy also (2,4)
- 11. Vocalise about the French winter, feeling the cold (9)
- 13. Show some connection about a confused tale (6)
- 14. See 1 Down
- 16. He gives the Spaniard an alternative (5)
- 18. See 2 Down.
- 20. See 19 Across.



Quick Clues:

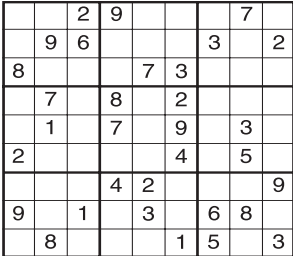
Across

- 6. Continue (7)
- 7. Cold dish (5)
- 9. Charge (3)
- 10. Instruct (9)
- 12. Dogged (11)
- 15. Apathetic (11)
- 17. Designer (9)
- 19. Attempt (3)
- 21. Young bullock (5)
- 22. Punishment (7)

Down

- 1. Command (5)
- 2. Perform (3)
- 3. Eager (4)
- 4. Assembly (9)
- 5. Display (7)
- 8. Argent (6)
- 11. Charmed (9)
- 13. Protection (6)
- 14. Falsehood (7)
- 16. Angry (5)
- 18. Gang (4)
- 20. Uncooked (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	6	9	5	3	4	1	2	8
2	8	1	6	7	9	3	5	4
5	3	4	1	6	2	8	9	7
3	2	7	8	4	5	9	6	1
9	1	8	7	6	3	2	4	5
6	4	5	9	2	1	8	7	3
8	7	3	4	9	6	5	1	2
4	5	6	2	1	8	7	3	9
1	9	2	3	5	7	4	8	6

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 No time to spare; 8 Hardship; 9 Oxen; 10 Divest; 12 Spruce; 14 Indoor; 16 Repeat; 18 Elna; 20 Achilles; 22 Reign of terror. Down: 1 Donation; 2 Riddle; 3 Mesh; 4 Composer; 5 Upstart; 6 Tree; 11 Toreador; 13 Chaperon; 15 Orange; 17 Paltry; 19 Then; 21 Hathi. QUICK - Across: 7 Expediently; 8 Sediment; 9 Tank; 10 Pile-up; 12 Thrash; 14 Brawny; 16 Resume; 18 Grab; 20 Inherent; 22 Foolhardiness. Down: 1 Exterior; 2 Desire; 3 Dire; 4 Dictator; 5 Muster; 6 Plan; 11 Physical; 13 Sameness; 15 Wobble; 17 Strong; 19 Room; 21 Hide.

Quiz

- 1. What is the orbital period of Halley's Comet?
- 2. What do the letters PS stand for?
- 3. Which football team plays at Goodison Park?
- 4. Who wrote The Naked Lunch?
- 5. Which actress starred in The Good Life and Rosemary & Thyme?
- 6. Who wrote the play The Doll's House in 1879?
- 7. In which country is Montego Bay?
- 8. Which former Chancellor of the Exchequer's middle name is Winston?
- 9. King Juan Carlos's wife is the daughter of which country's former king?
- 10. Of which county is Rutland now a part?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Judy Garland and Vincente Minnelli; 2 Genoa; 3 Carbon; 4 Bluebird; 5 Arctic; 6 Nautilus; 7 Stanley Matthews; 8 Trombone; 9 Finches; 10 Henry Irving. Niner: PARBOILED

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

36821 gives a flower,  
8289 gives another flower,  
7854 gives a fruit.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



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**FOR SALE £127,500**  
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**GORNAL**

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**SEATON PLACE**  
**£695 pcm\***  
 Semi-Detached House, Lounge with Dining Area off, Kitchen, Walk-in Storage Cupboard, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, Garage, Off Road Parking, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Rear Garden



**TETTENHALL**

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**BRIERLEY HILL**

**MORRIS COURT**  
**£495 pcm\***  
 Top Floor Flat, Entrance, Lounge, Kitchen, TWO BEDROOMS, Bathroom with shower, Allocated Parking, Maintained Communal Grounds, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, NO PETS, DSS CONSIDERED



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**£375 pcm\***  
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**LYE**

**BANK STREET**  
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 Terrace Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Two Large Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Rear Gardens



**GORNAL**

**EVE LANE**  
**£620 pcm\***  
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**BRIERLEY HILL**

**BENT STREET**  
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**PENSNETT**

**ELGAR CRESCENT**  
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**RUSSELLS HALL**

**MERRYFIELD ROAD**  
**£550 pcm\***  
 Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Dining Room, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Unfurnished, Off Road Parking, Front & Rear Gardens



**LYE**

**KING STREET**  
**£495 pcm\***  
 Mid Terrace House, Entrance, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, Gardens to Front & Rear, Off Road Parking to rear for 2 cars, Gas Central Heating, Sealed Units, UNFURNISHED



**PENSNETT**

**TILED HOUSE LANE**  
**£625 pcm\***  
 Semi-Detached House, Entrance, Lounge, Kitchen, Conservatory, Bathroom with shower, Off Road Parking for 2/3 cars, Gardens to Front & Rear, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing.



**BRIERLEY HILL**

**WELLS ROAD**  
**£575 pcm\***  
 Semi-Detached House, Entrance Hall, Good Sized Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, Off Road Parking, Gardens to Front & Rear, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, UNFURNISHED



**NETHERTON**

**NORWICH ROAD**  
**£525 pcm\***  
 Terrace Property, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Bathroom, Three Bedrooms, Gas Central Heating, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking



**UDLEY**

**RUSSELLS HALL ROAD**  
**£550 pcm\***  
 Fully Refurbished Semi-Detached House, Entrance, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, Front & Rear Gardens, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, UNFURNISHED



**KINGSWINFORD**

**ROWAN RISE**  
**£550 pcm\***  
 Semi Detached Property, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Front & Rear Gardens, Gas Central Heating, Unfurnished, NO PETS



**PENSNETT**

**TANSEY GREEN ROAD**  
**£545 pcm\***  
 End Terrace Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, Garage at rear, Front & Rear Gardens, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing



**STOURBRIDGE**

**BAGLEYS ROAD**  
**£395 pcm\***  
 Ground Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Double Bedroom, Electric Heating, Double Glazing



**WORDSLEY**

**BRACKEN PARK GARDENS**  
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## PROPERTY

# A superbly appointed detached residence



A SUPERBLY appointed detached residence in Bellen-croft Gardens, Wolverhampton, is on the fringe of the city.

It is for sale through Rees Page at £219,950. It has a reception hall, lounge with a feature fireplace, dining room with doors out to the rear, a lovely kitchen with soft close doors and drawers, blue LED mood lighting, floor tiling with under floor heating, centre island unit and a pantry, garage and WC. There are three bedrooms and a recently re-fitted bathroom. Contact Rees Page on 01902 577799 or visit [www.reespage.net](http://www.reespage.net)



# Imposing five-bedroom Victorian semi-detached



THIS imposing five-bedroom Victorian semi-detached residence in Coalway Road, Penn, has a host of charming character features.

It is for sale through Nick Tart at £340,000. Having been sympathetically re-styled, it has a reception hall with original door, Minton flooring and cellar off, WC, drawing room with a Victorian-style fireplace with a living flame gas coal-effect fire, bay window and polished floorboards. There is a separate sitting room with a feature fireplace with a living flame gas coal-effect fire, open plan dining kitchen, walk-in pantry, built-in wine rack, and French doors to a patio, staircase to a galleried landing, bathroom, four first floor bedrooms, second floor bedroom five, driveway, garage and garden. Contact 01902 755585 or visit [www.nicktart.com](http://www.nicktart.com)



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# New engine for the Swift

By Graham Breeze

**Suzuki is determined to strengthen its UK position with the January arrival of a new and much more efficient engine for Swift.**

The company has recognised opposition growth in this lower end of the market with Fiesta and Corsa both boasting efficient one-litre alternatives and launched a new 1.2-litre petrol unit incorporating Suzuki's latest technology, utilising twin fuel injectors for improved fuel economy.

That means fewer trips to the petrol pump, startling fuel figures and emission levels lower than the vehicle excise charge level.

The new technology, known as Dualjet, has resulted in Swift boasting 65.7mpg on the combined fuel consumption cycle, representing a 16 per cent improvement over the current petrol engine.

Another benefit of Dualjet technology is reduced CO2 emissions of 99g/km, meaning that Swift models with this engine are now exempt from VED (Vehicle Excise Duty) charges.

Outwardly the test car looked no different and to be honest it was impossible to tell it apart from the current petrol model – the only difference will be in the driver's pocket.

When the car arrives in showrooms in January it will cost you an extra £500 but owners will recoup the extra spend pretty

quickly. Add the money you save on visits to the pumps to the £175 saving on excise licence costs and it makes sense to choose the new Dualjet model.

It's a complex system but the new technology positions the fuel injectors closer to the engine inlet valves allows for a finer fuel mixture which provides a more effective transfer into the cylinder. Internal modifications to the engine include the use of a new type of inlet port and combustion chamber with other mechanical parts also modified to reduce frictional losses and provide smoother running.

The maximum power output is 90PS versus 94PS for the current petrol engine with a slightly increased torque figure of 120Nm at 4,400rpm versus 118Nm at 4,800rpm.

Other modifications include slight alterations to gear ratios for greater flexibility on the road, and the addition of Engine Auto Stop Start (EASS).

The new Dualjet technology for Swift will initially be available as an optional engine choice on SZ4 two wheel drive models.

There are, of course, better equipped opponents to Swift and while you get what you pay for with this model inside the cabin there's a dynamic feel and attractive black seats with colour-coding stripes.

Global sales of Swift have now passed the four million mark since launch in 2004 – 18 months after the celebration of three million units. Launched in the UK in May 2005; more than 90,000 Swifts have been sold and now account for around 30 per cent of the UK sales mix.

Since June 2014 all Swift models are fitted as standard with LED daytime running



**'It was impossible to tell it apart from the current petrol model – the only difference will be in the driver's pocket.'**

lights and front fog lights. A gear shift indicator was also added on manual models to help aid fuel efficiency as well as a Tyre Pressure Monitor System.

Swift is available in four clearly defined specification grades, SZ2, SZ3, SZ4 plus Swift Sport; in addition to seven airbags and ESP as standard, SZ2 has front passenger airbag deactivation facility, electric front windows, remote central door locking with deadlocks, electrically adjustable and heated door mirrors.

There's a MP3/WMA compatible CD

tuner with USB port and steering wheel mounted audio controls. SZ3 adds air conditioning, 16-inch alloy wheels, an integrated audio unit with bluetooth connectivity, including music streaming facility.

Since June, SZ4 models are equipped with navigation and DAB digital radio as standard which adds to the already high specification that includes automatic air conditioning, electric rear windows, rear privacy glass, push button keyless start, automatic headlamps, cruise control and mirrors with integrated turn indicators.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km). Lowest: Vauxhall Corsa 3 Door Hatchback 1.2i 85PS 16v Excite A/C with 14", 15" and 16" wheels, M5: Urban: 39.2 (7.2), Extra-urban: 62.8 (4.5), Combined: 51.4 (5.5). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 129g/km. Highest: Vauxhall Corsa 3 dr Hatchback 1.6i 16V 192PS VXR Turbo (A/C) with 17" wheels, M6: Urban: 28.8 (9.8), Extra-urban: 47.9 (5.9), Combined: 38.7 (7.3). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 172g/km

Available at participating retailers only. Conditional Sale. Offers available on orders or registrations made by 31st December 2014. Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. Picture for illustration purposes only. \*All quotations are subject to credit approval. Vauxhall Leasing reserves the right to amend quotations in the event of changes to manufacturer prices, interest rates and volume related bonus. Vauxhall Leasing reserve the right to amend quotations in the event of any change to VAT/RFL or any other statutory charges or taxes which may become appropriate from time to time. The Excess PPM (price per mile) figures represent the price up to 9,999 miles followed by the price over 9,999 miles. ALD Automotive Ltd, trading as Vauxhall Leasing, Oakwood Park, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3JA. Reg No. 987418 England.



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	06/56 Kia Sportage XS 2.0 Diesel 84k, Silver, Alloys, Black Leather, Air Con <b>£5995 / £35 Per Week</b>		07/07 Suzuki Swift 1.3 GL one owner 47k, Burnt Orange, CD Player, E/Windows <b>£3995 / £23 Per Week</b>
	08/08 Saab 9-3 Vector Sport DTH Diesel Automatic Estate 80k, Grey, Two Tone Leather, Alloys <b>£5995 / £35 Per Week</b>		08/08 Nissan Micra 1.2 16v (79hp) Acenta+ 3dr, 48k, Grey Metallic, *LOW INSURANCE* Air Con <b>£3995 / £23 Per Week</b>
	08/08 Suzuki SX4 1.6 GLX ONLY 16k MILES, Silver, Alloys, Air Con, CD <b>£5495 / £32 Per Week</b>		09/09 Citroen Xsara Picasso 1.6 HDi 92hp VTX DIESEL 79k, Grey Metallic, Alloys, Air Con <b>£3995 / £23 Per Week</b>
	09/09 Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 SXI CDTi Diesel 3dr, 52k, Grey Metallic, Alloys, Air Con <b>£4995 / £30 Per Week</b>		05/55 Vauxhall Astra Club 1.6 Twinport Semi-Automatic Blue, 50k, Alloys, Air Con <b>£3295 / £22 Per Week</b>
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Finance example: Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 SXI Diesel, Cash Price £4995, Deposit £300, Amount of credit £4695, Fixed interest rate 6.25% Flat rate, 12% APR, 48 Payments of £122.28 (£30.50 per week) Total amount payable £6169.44 (Excludes £150 Document fee and £150 Completion fee, Subject to status)

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## DRIVETIME

# Ford's popular Kuga SUV gets boost with an update

The Blue Oval car maker Ford has updated its popular Kuga sports utility vehicle with improved engines and more in-car technology.

Under the bonnet the flagship Kuga diesel model receives a horsepower boost, with the 2.0-litre motor's output now 180 horsepower – 17 more than before. It's also cleaner, with the 2.0-litre diesel family now producing less CO2.

It's the same story on the petrol front, with Ford swapping the Kuga's

1.6-litre EcoBoost engine for a 1.5-litre unit and reducing CO2 emissions to 143g/km from 154g/km.

Improved Alongside the engine upgrades, Ford has improved the car's kit levels. The firm's innovative SYNC with AppLink multimedia interface will now enable drivers to voice-activate apps, while keeping their eyes on the road and their hands on the wheel. These already include leading music-streaming services Spotify, Audioteka, Glympse and Radioplayer.

Furthermore, the Kuga can be had

with adaptive cruise control including forward alert, which warns drivers if they are travelling too close to the vehicle in front.

Another standard technology is the tyre pressure monitoring system, which warns if any of the tyres lose significant pressure during a journey.

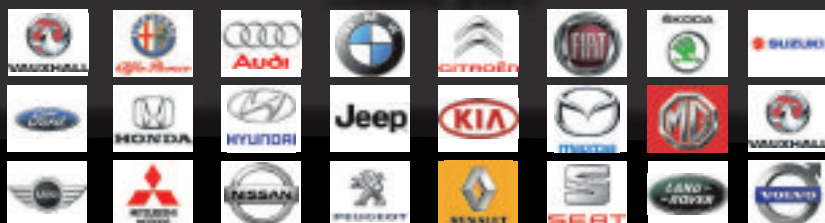
Further available technologies include hands-free tailgate, blind spot information system, active city stop, lane keeping aid, lane keeping alert, auto high beam, driver alert and traffic sign recognition.



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	63 Reg RAV-4 4D <b>£18495 or £85 pw</b>		58 Reg Seat Altea TDI <b>£4995 or £25 pw</b>		10 Reg BMW 116D <b>£8495 or £40 pw</b>
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Finance Example - Cash Price £4995, Less Cash or Part Exchange Deposit £500, Amount of Credit £4495, Total Amount Payable £5999.20, 60 Monthly Payments of £99.82 or 240 Weekly Payments of £23.04.

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## 3

## Home & Services

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# 8

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**MAZDA 6 TSD** Diesel Estate, 2009, 87k, MoT Sept, met copper red, a/c, multi CD, a/w, cruise control, clean, tidy, £3,850. 07941 112657.

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**FORD KA LUXURY** 52, black, leather interior, 12 months MoT, A/C, E/W, C/L, lady owner 73k. £825 ono 07754 557861

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**RENAULT LAGUNA** 1.9 DCI Expression Sat Nav, Sep 06, MoT Sept 15, 92k, very clean, £1,500. 07522 475039 / 01922 865235.

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# 10

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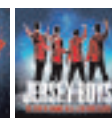
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## Yeltz are through to first round

FA Trophy 3rd Qualifying Round  
Halesowen Town 2  
Gresley FC 0

LATE goals from Iydsen Christie and Chris Lait finally overcame Gresley's stubborn resistance.

Halesowen were propelled into the FA Trophy first round proper. Gritty Gresley's hopes were boosted on the news that their Halesowen nemesis Ben Haseley would miss the game through a virus.

And it was the Moatmen who were much happier with the goal-less first half after containing their higher league hosts to keep them from getting ahead in the game.

Christie stabbed just wide from eight yards in the 15th minute and Gresley goalkeeper Ross Atkins made a tremendous 38th minute save after Robert Thompson-Brown was put clear on goal with Danny Bragoli only planting the inviting rebound over the bar.

Halesowen's patience was paid off with two goals within in the last 10 minutes.

On the 81st minute Christie finally got the Yeltz off the mark. A defensive lapse saw home substitute Lait steal in.

The Yeltz have been drawn away to Gateshead on Saturday December 13.

## Golbourne will be out for weeks

WOLVES defender Scott Golbourne faces several weeks out after suffering a recurrence of his long-term foot injury.

The 26-year-old full-back only made his return at Brentford on Saturday after missing nearly two months with plantar fasciitis – a problem which affects the arch of the foot.

But he lasted just 45 minutes at Griffin Park before having to come off and head coach Kenny Jackett revealed the defender now faces even more time on the sidelines.

"The first estimate is that he will be out for several weeks," he said.

"It is what he had before and that will be a good few weeks out."

# Edwards apologises to Wolves fans for loss

DAVE EDWARDS has apologised to supporters after admitting Wolves "capitulated" at Brentford at the weekend when he and his team mates came away from the Bees' ground defeated.

Kenny Jackett's men slumped to a fourth straight Championship defeat as they were beaten 4-0 at Griffin Park on Saturday in front of a sold-out away following of 1,603.

And Molineux midfielder Edwards admits their current form simply isn't good enough with his boss calling for the squad to start putting up a fight in the coming matches.

"We have to make our apologies to the fans," he said.

## Football

"For whatever reason at the moment, it's just not good enough."

Wolves fell behind to Alan Judge's first-half opener but were still well in the game until Stuart Dallas doubled the Bees' advantage with 16 minutes to go and effectively sealed the fate of the visitors and added to the growing tally of goals mounting against Wolves.

Things then got only got worse for Wolves when Andre Gray and Jato, in stoppage

time, added further goals for the hosts to seal the game and shut out Jackett's men.

Edwards added: "As soon as we conceded the second goal, like against Forest, we just capitulated. We can't do that and for that we are sorry to the fans – it's not a good display for them to see."

"Hopefully they know that we are doing all we can inside to try and put things right."

"We will be working our socks off this week to make sure we can turn it around and get some confidence from somewhere going into the Bournemouth game on Saturday."

Edwards believes the players need to

stand up and be counted in order to halt a slump which has seen Wolves fall to 12th in the table. "A lot of the lads here won't have been in this situation before, although the older lads have done," he said.

"It is about trying to keep a cool head because it does become more difficult when you are losing 2-0 or 3-0."

"It becomes harder to get on the ball, harder to make those passes, but we are professional footballers – that is what we are paid to do and we have to do it."

"It's only us on the pitch that can change it and we need to stand up and be counted," added Edwards.

# DK grab sweet win over Bournville side

DK 52 Bournville 15

WITH a North Midlands Cup Plate match to play, both sides selected squads with an eye to the future.

They rested players and exposed others to the First Team environment. This provided fans from both clubs with a very entertaining game which was high on effort and commitment.

Though, the final score of 52-15 to DK does not reflect the competitive nature of the first half which finished 19-10 to DK, but DK were able to steadily impose their game on Bournville in the second half when they added five more tries.

The opening encounters of the game were mainly dominated by Bournville.

They were rewarded by a penalty and then added a try by their full back Scott Harman which was converted.

From a lineout, Chris Gledhill secured the ball which flashed across the DK backs to Laured Kalari who made a break, off loading to Ben Brown who scored the try, converted by Kieran Pinches. Later in the half Ben Brown added a second try.

Just before half timeprop Rich Gresswell crashed over for a well-deserved try in his first competitive game for the first time.

Within a few minutes the second half the game was effectively won, when Ben Brown scored a third, and Donavon Smile raced under the posts, following a fine run down the left wing, to which Kieran added the extras.

The forwards had laid the platform for this victory.

## Rugby

The scrummage was competitive.

The centres finished off the scoring with Laured scoring the next following a fine line break by Kieran made it.

Then an angled run by Donavon Smile saw him in for a try to make it a brace for the centre. Kieran added the extras.

Laured then finished the try scoring and with the conversion saw DK 52-10 up.

The Bench had been emptied by this point with Ash Newel replacing the excellent Rich Gresswell.

The other two replacements were an interesting duo who certainly deserved their chance after some excellent performances earlier in the season, Rhys Davies and Joey Kennedy, once again their first competitive first team games.

Bournville showed the competitive nature of the game by coming back to score the last try through their Aussie No.14 to make the final score 52-15.

It turned out to be a thoroughly entertaining game.

## Tennis club honours members at awards night



Richard Cartwright with from left, Michael Scriven, Tom Badland, Ethan Adams, Lydia Condylyffe-Fisher

WOLLASTON Lawn Tennis Club honoured its members through its annual presentation evening.

Club chairman John Cutler, and coach Richard Cartwright presented trophies and medals to the club's 2014 champions both young and old.

Awards were presented to all those who had taken part in the 2014 Junior Club Championships, with other awards given to most improved player and also outstanding commitment to the club during the year.

The year has seen the club undertake new initiatives with perhaps the main achievement being the self-funded £130,000 investment in new Courts.

This has been to renovate four of the eight courts at the club, two of which offer an excellent clay surface to simulate Roland Garros in Paris. New improved flood lighting have also been added to the Courts.

Mr Cutler said, it was a wonderful occasion to celebrate the Club's 2014 Champions but also reflect the Clubs achievements in what has been a busy year.

"We've completed a £130k investment project. More than this though we have tried to take on new events and competitions to offer something to everyone. It was wonderful to be able to celebrate everyone's efforts during the year."

## Whiley comes in third at Masters

HALESOWEN'S Jordanne Whiley claimed third place in the prestigious Wheelchair Tennis Masters in London as she fought back from the blow of her semi-final loss.

The 22-year-old defeated world No.1 Yui Kamiji of Japan 6-3, 6-3 in the third-place play-off at the weekend.

A day earlier Whiley had let a lead of a set and 5-2 slip to lose in the semi-finals of the event in London.

The 22-year-old twice served for the match before losing 6-7 (4-7), 7-5, 6-2 to world No.3 Aniek van Koot of the Netherlands, who went on to claim the title.

She beat fellow Dutchwoman Jiske Griffioen 3-6, 6-4, 6-1.

"After Saturday I was pretty gutted and to be honest I still haven't got over it but I didn't want to finish on a low, I wanted to finish on a high and not just beat the World No.1 once," said Whiley. "I wanted to come out and do it again and I wanted to make sure that I got the first match point which I did so there were some personal goals that I wanted to achieve which I did."

"I do see the positives coming out of this tournament," she added.

## Albion will not get any new faces

UNDER-FIRE boss Alan Irvine says Albion are unlikely to overhaul their squad in January despite several of their summer signings failing to make an impact.

Irvine revealed he has not been involved since the summer in drawing up lists of possible targets for the transfer window.

And he reckons wholesale changes will be difficult with the Baggies needing to offload players before they can add new faces to their squad.

"Since the window closed I haven't been in the recruitment room once so I've got no idea what the lists are," admitted the Scot.

"It's not part of my remit. I focus on the squad we've got."

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# SPORT

**Sweet win**  
DK take spoils in  
friendly match  
**Page 39**

**Club honours**  
Tennis players enjoy  
awards night  
**Page 39**



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## Hackett is given food for thought

**Buxton 4 Stourbridge 1**  
MANAGER Gary Hackett was given plenty to ponder after watching Stourbridge finish very much second best to promotion-chasing Buxton.

The opening goal on 25 minutes had an element of fortune when Drew Canavan's challenge sent the ball into the path of Shaun Tuton and he evaded keeper Dean Coleman to slide the ball into the net.

It seemed it wasn't going to be Stourbridge's day when Exodus Geohaghen and Jordan Fitzpatrick both limped off before the half hour mark and it got worse when Liam Hardy doubled Buxton's lead just before half-time, converting a cross from Craig King.

After a half-time rollicking, Stourbridge stepped up their game and after Kayelden Brown was fouled Canavan curled a stunning 20-yard free-kick into the top corner to give them renewed hope.

Brown might have levelled, only for Buxton keeper Arron Jameson to save, and the hosts ended the stronger.

A cross from the right bounced over the foot of Glassboys defender Chris Knight with Hardy tucking home his second and Laurie Wilson making it 4-1 in stoppage time.

## Runners in 'Suicide' race

ATHLETES from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club competed in one of the toughest off road races in the area.

The Suicide 6 is a six-mile race organised by the Action Heart Charity held in Bagderidge Country Park.

The blue hoops managed a total 40 runners with Gary Bonner leading them home in 34th place in 43.48, just ahead of Dave Norman, a place and a mere seven seconds adrift and Darren Bishop a further second behind in 38th place.

James Wright held onto 42nd place in 44.16, from Mick Quane in 45.52. Simon Hughes was 68th in 46.25, Kieran Pitt was 83rd in 47.59, Richard Tonks was 103rd in 48.43, Mark Judge was 111th in 49.24, Helen Tromans 116th in 49.32, Paul Silk was 50.12 for 124th place and Mark Homer clocked 50.19 (126).

## Tividale are simply out of Leek's league

**Leek Town 2 Tividale 0**

TIVIDALE went down to two goals that epitomised the step up in standard to the Evo-Stik First Division South.

The first a pass of poor quality. The second a clinical finish from a moment of indecision. And though the visitors battled gamely they were never able to quite bridge the gap in quality to the home side.

Leek were a goal up after just 15 minutes when Matt Bell played a perfectly weighted ball in between Danny Ashton and Mark Smith for Tim Grice to run onto and finish.

It was now going to be an uphill struggle

**Football**

to get back into the game but on 18 minutes Tividale had their first chance when Karl Edwards headed over a Mitchell Botfield cross. Five minutes later Roland Agor fired a snapshot on the turn that Leek keeper Ross Etheridge held comfortably.

Leek then had two chances within a minute to increase their lead. First a neat pass by Sam Hall played in Liam Shotton but his effort was turned for a corner by keeper Charlie Price. From the corner Price was

again on hand to clear. Although Leek had the better of the half Tividale would have felt that they were still in it at 1-0 down going into half-time. But disaster struck in stoppage time when a split second of indecision over a clearance after Price had blocked a Dan Shelley shot was enough for Shotton to nip in and fire home the second.

The visitors took the fight to the home side in the second period, although they could not mount a sustained amount of pressure to cause Leek too many real problems.

Leek on the other hand were always a

threat and the first chance of the second half fell to Shotton.

Tividale's skipper Mark Smith seemed to slip just before a clearance and the ball ran through to Shotton but he fired wide. Zac Foster had Tividale's first effort of the half on goal but it was deflected wide.

A shot by Leek sub Sean Kinsella was saved at the second attempt by Price this after a great bit of play by Grice in laying off the ball to Kinsella.

In the end that bit of quality from a side that was playing Conference football not long ago proved to be the difference.

## Wolves stung by the Bees

**Brentford 4 Wolves 0**

WOLVES' head coach departed Brentford's Griffin Park knowing he faces the biggest challenge since he first walked into the Compton Park training ground some 18 months ago.

The 4-0 defeat will have hurt Kenny Jackett, clearly, as will the way in which those goals were conceded. So too will his team's continued inability to fire at the other end – it is now some 307 minutes since Wolves scored.

For 29 minutes they looked set to deliver the kind of solid, secure performance required before one poor pass from Lee Evans saw them horribly exposed.

When Gray then burst forward down the left, it took just one simple square pass to the onrushing Judge to open up the Wolves backline, the latter taking a touch before sliding a finish past Carl Ikeme.

They were again undone far too easily for the second goal, when Pritchard set up Dallas for the simplest of finishes. Gray then thumped one in.

Jota slid home in the fourth minute of stoppage time.

## Nathan nets winner for TD

**Team Dudley 3 Trysull 2**  
STEVE Whitehouse and 17-year-old Calvin Campbell had put them 2-0 ahead before Trysull could get a foothold in the game.

They were level with an 81st minute Danny Patrick effort and Liam Illsley's strike five minutes later – Dudley's Nathan Jones hit the winner.

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# RYAN RACKS UP A RECORD TALLY

**Stourbridge 46 Preston Grasshoppers 36**

**FULLBACK** Caolan Ryan's 36 points set a new club record for individual points scoring in a game.

He has overtaken Ali Bressington who had scored 35 against Westcombe Park back in 2008. It was as well for Stour that his goal-kicking radar was also functioning well.

The first try was set up by centre Sione Tu'ipolotu rumbling up midfield from a lineout, flankers Nigel Mukarati and Eji Uzoigwe linking to put Ryan into space before winger Nathan Geekie outflanked the defences.

The visitors opted to run from deep, recycled quickly for outside half Lewis Allen to spot a gap in the defensive line. Through he went, showing a clean pair of heels to score under the posts.

### Confidence

Stour returned the compliment, Jacob Nash worked the ball right to Ryan who scored in the corner.

Allen slotted a penalty but Stour secured another attacking lineout, this time centre Stef Shillingford driving it up the central channels before the alert Ryan found his way under the posts.

Stour then moved the ball wide to Bressington who chipped over the fullback.

The ball cannoned off the defending winger and was gathered by Ryan who dived on it to secure his hat-trick try then grabbed the conversion.

Two further successful Ryan penalty kicks concluded the first half scoring.

### Rugby

Stour restarted on the attack, but a turnover allowed Allen to counter, slicing through the defence to put fullback Mark Murray in.

After a sequence of Stour attacks, referee Claire Hodnett lost patience and sin-binned Preston's replacement, prop Brad Tuff, Ryan slotting another penalty kick.

But despite the numerical advantage a Stour attack was turned over deep in Preston's 22, they countered and Allen found himself with acres of space.

Ryan struck back with another penalty after the visitors dropped a scrum near their own line.

Preston drove prop Peter Altham over in a catch and drive.

They then spilled the ball in their 22, gifting a try to replacement outside half Gareth Bown who simply picked it up and wrong footed the defenders.

Another overcooked lineout throw and some tired defensive work gifted Preston centre Sam Russell a final try at the death. This Saturday Stour play league leaders Hull Ionians.



Fullback and new club record points scorer Caolan Ryan celebrates one of his hat-trick of tries

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